GROWTH OF THE ENGLISH TRADE UNDER THE GREAT MUGHALS 1556-1707

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PRAMOD KUMAR SANGAR

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
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PREFACE

There is no dearth of works on the rise and fall of European trade in the Indian sub-contient during three centuries (XVI-XVIII). The trading activities, political history, and administrative organisation of the individual countries like England, France, Holland and Portugal have also attracted the attention of a galaxy of western and Indian scholars. However, the English trade in India has largely been analysed on a regional or coastal basis. Recent scholars have done remarkable work on trading centres and organisations located in Gujrat, Coromandel Coast and Bengal. Their area of research is somewhat limited and narrow, often mixed up with other economic facets of the regions covered. At times, they have laid more emphasis on the politics of the period, side-lining trade and commerce.

There is hardly any work dealing with the growth of the English trade as a whole in the entire sub-continent under the Great Mughals. My aim has been to fill this gap and examine the nature of English trade and commercial activity on all India basis, The causes leading to its expansion from west coast to east coast via Coromandel, increase in its volume, articles of trade, methods of payment, exchange of money and banking, transport and trade routes and rapport of English merchants with Indian market, the artisans, the intermedaries,

the Mughal monarchs, the princes, the nobles, and their administrators. The influence, if any, of English trade on socio-economic developments and future political implications in terms of the subsequent establishment of British Empire in India have also been taken note of.

Chronologically, the thesis covers the period, 1556-1707 A.D. and yet it relies heavily on English source materials on account of paucity of adequate data in the contemporary Mughal Chronicles and records which have also been fully utilized. Modern works, relevent to the subject, have not been neglected. The foot notes and the bibliography abundantly testify my indebtedness to the pioneers in the field.

I also take this opportunity to express my grateful thanks to my esteemed guide Dr. R.C.Jauhri,Professor of History, Panjab University,Chandigarh, who ungrudingly spared his precious time to enable me to complete this work.

I am under a great obligation to the I.C.H.R. and U.G.C. for having sanctioned grants for visiting various libraries in order to collect material relevent to my thesis. My thanks are also due to the staff and Librarians, National Library, Calcutta, Panjab University Library,Chandigarh,Dwarka Dass Library, Chandigarh and National Archives of India, Delhi.Needless to mention that my father Dr. S.P.Sangar has been a constant source of inspiration throughout.

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PRAMOD SANGAR

CONTENTS

		Page No.
Preface	... ...	1-11
CHAPTERS		
I	Foreign Trade Before the Advent of the English	1-16
II	Rise of English Trade to Prominence	17-48
III	Towards Tripod Trading Centres: West Coast	49-95
IV	Towards Tripod Trading Centres: Coromandel Coast	96-124
V	Towards Tripod Trading Centres: East Coast	125-180
VI	Principal Exports: Spices, Indigo and Saltpetre	181-245
VII	Principal Exports: Silk and Textiles	246-278
VIII	Principal Imports	279-315
IX	Trade Routes and Transport	316-381
X	Trade Auxiliaries: Currency, Banking and Hundies	382-413
XI	Conclusion/Resume: English Trade and the Mughal Emperors 1556-1707	414-434
Afterward	... ...	435-439
Bibliography	... ...	440-456

CHAPTER I

FOREIGN TRADE BEFORE THE ADVENT OF THE ENGLISH

India had trade relations with the outside world right from the ancient times and Indian goods were rated very high in the eyes of the foreigners. The magnitude of the commercial activities is quite apparent from the following words of Piliny, "In no year does India drain our empire of less than five hundred and fifty million of Sestreces(about £ 1,400,00) giving back her own wares in exchange which are sold at fully one hundred times their prime cost".[1]

In the Vedic period, Sea or Samundra was frequently used for the trade purposes. There is a reference to a story in the Rgveda as how Bhugya, whose ship wrecked in the sea was saved by a boat with hundred oars".[2] There are ample references

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[1]H.Rackham(Eng.tr.) Pliny's Natural History, Vol.X, London, 1940, pp. 17-18.

[2]Rgveda; 1:116.3, Vedic Sanshodan Mandal, 2nd ed., Poona,1972.

in Vedic literature to trade in distant lands for profit.[3] There are also references to the treasures of the ocean, perhaps pearls or gains.[4] The trade was mostly carried through the barter system.[5]

The merchants who controlled the foreign trade were known by the various names as Dasus, Panis, Vrtra, Sambhar , etc., Panis were referred to as Dasus, who held a prominent place in the field of trade and commerce.[6] They were according to Roth and Zimmer, a niggardly merchant class who neither worshipped nor believed in it. Ludwing believes them to be the aboriginal class.[7] They were non-Arayans. Panis were probably the first to discover the sea route for international commerce. These (Panis) people in search of better trade prospects, navigated almost all the sea-coasts of India. They first settled down on the coast of modern Gujrat and later on migrated to Malabar coast which was rich in timber, needed for ship building.[8]

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[3] Ibid., p. 1:116.3

[4] Rgveda, I, 12.5

[5] Ibid., 116.3

[6] Ibid., .II 2.49, VII 1.63.

[7] A.B.Keith and A.A.Macdonell(eds.), Vedic Index, Vol. II, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1967, pp.381-88.

[8] Prakash Charan Prasad, Foreign Trade and Commerce in Ancient India, Abhinav Publications, Delhi, p.22.

It has been proved the "existence of an extensive trade between India and Western Asia about the 7th century B.C. The trade was chiefly in the hands of Dravidians although the Arayans had a share in it. The Indian traders settled afterwards in Arabia and on the coast of Africa as we find them settling at this very time on the coast of China, we cannot doubt that they had their settlement in Babylon also".[9] Thus, by 7th century B.C., India had established trade relations with Ceylon, Burma and Babylon. The ships laden with Indian merchandize reached Burma and Ceylon from the ports of Western India, Cambay and Broach.[10] The merchandize mainly consisted of silks,muslins, cloth, cutlery, armour, brocades, embroideries,rugs,ivory, jewellery and gold.

The Ramayan refers to merchants who trafficked beyond the sea and brought presents of gems to the King of Ayodhaya.[12] Balmiki has also mentioned large trading ships with sails loaded with rich merchandize.[13] Kauseya or silk was very popular with the ladies of high class. In Ravana's Ashokavatika,

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[9]J.Kennedy, "Early Commerce of Babylon with India", The Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1898, Vol. XXX, pp.241-288.

[10]E.J.Rapson, Cambridge History of India(Ancient India), Cambridge University Press, London, 1922, p.4.

[11]T.W.Rhys Davids, Buddist India, T.Fisher Unwin Ltd., London, 1902, p. 98.

[12]M.N.Dutt, Balmiki's Ramayana(translated), Deva Press, Calcutta, 1890.

[13]Ibid., p. 126.

Sita is shown clad in silk. It (silk)* was also an important item of export. It is known that even before the epic period, India was carrying the silk trade with China in 680 B.C.[14]

With the advent of Buddism, Indian trade was almost a settled affair. There are references in the Jatakas and the Vinaya that India had sea-borne trade with the countries outside India. The Buddhist literature abounds in allusions to sea-voyage and the traders visited Babylon, Ceylon and golden chersoned.[15] The chief ports were Champa and Tamralipti on the east coast and Bhrrukaccha and Suppra on the Western coast.[16] There are references to the settlement of Dantapura on the Kalinga coast and probable references to the ports of Bhurukccha and Supparka.[17] The Jatakas also mention many of sea coast towns and some coastal regions. Thus, the Ghata Jataka contains the accounts of the city of Dvarvati. Another book Baveru Jataka evidently speaks of a voyage to Baveru.[18]

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[14] A.F.M.Abdul Ali, "The Silk Industry in Bengal in the Days of John Company," Indian Historical Records Commission, Vol.VII, January, 1925, p.88.

*For Chinese origin of silk trade see George Watt,

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[15] E.B.Cowell, Jatakas, Eng.tr.by H.T.Francis, Vol.V, Mahajanaka Jataka, Cambridge University, London, 1973, pp.19, 22, 24-25.

[16] E.B.Cowell, Supparka Jataka (tr.) Vol.IV, Cambridge University Press, pp.86-90.

[17] Rhys Davids, Buddhist India, p. 31

[18] E.B.Cowell, Baveru Jataka, Vol.III, Cambridge University Press, London, 1973, p.83.

The establishment of the Mauryan Empire brought a great change in the commercial pattern of the country. The extension of the Empire beyond the Hindukush led to the expansion of India's foreign trade. Chandragupta Maurya brought trade under State control and the trade regulations were carefully planned and executed. The person incharge of trade was termed as Panyadhyakas or Superintendent of Trade. Kautilya laid great emphasis on the foreign trade and set rules regarding trade and traders: "the Superintendent of Commerce shall show favour to those who import foreign merchandize; mariners(Navika) and merchants who import foreign merchandise shall be favoured with the remission of trade taxes so that they may derive some profit". Foreigners importing merchandize shall be exempted from being sued for debts unless they are (local) associates and partners.[19] Therefore, the most important function of Superintendent of Commerce was to promote and encourage the foreign trade. He had to be very careful in ascertaining the scope of export of local produce into foreign countries. Regarding the sale of King's commodities in foreign countries, the duty of the Superintendent of Commerce was to find out by calculations whether there was any margin of profit left after meeting the payments to the foreign king. The Superintendent of Commerce also fixed the wholesale prices of goods as and when they entered in the custom's house. Smuggling or adulteration of goods was severely punished.[20]

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[19] R.Shamasastry, Kautilya's Arthasastra(translated),Mysore University Press, Mysore, 1923, p.115.

[20] Ibid.

Megasthenes, as referred to by Arrian and Strabo, described though not in greater details the royal roads of the Mauryas which connected Pataliputra with the northwestern frontier of the Empire.[21] It had a number of rest houses and posts indicating distances and directions.[22] There was the old grand trunk road leading from Rajagriha through Banaras, Saketa and Srvasti towards Taxila and the frontiers, linking India with central and Western Asia. Megasthenese has also testified the presence of royal road leading from the north-west frontier upto Pataliputra with a length of 10,000 stades (= about 7,156 miles). The travellers were provided with many comforts like rest houses, trees and wells on the roadside.[23]

After the fall of the Mauryan Empire, India's foreign trade suffered. On the ruins of its imperial structure sprang up a number of small principalities, both republican and monarchical like Taxila, Panchalas, Mathura, Kausambi and a host of others and the trade routes also came under the control of more than one state which proved detrimental to the once free flow of commerce. The traders from different lands had to pay tolls or customs to many small kingdoms which was highly irritating. As a result the

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[21] H.L.Jones, Geography (translated), Vol. I, 1930, p.17.

[22] R.J.Forbes, Ancient Roads, 1964, p. 88.

[23] R.C.Majumdar(ed.), The Age of Imperial Unity, Vol. II,Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1980, p. 606.

foreign trade became more or less sea-borne trade and reached great heights during the time of Satvahanas. The guilds(Srenis) became a normal feature of the age. Each guild had a constitution with a President or headman and small executive council. These guilds became very powerful and sometimes the head of the guild was an 'important personage' in the court.[24] The guild regarding trade and industry also laid down rules for trade and traders. The trade flourished and ships laden with merchandise visited the ports of Broach, Sopara and Kalyan. The two important inland ports were Tagara and Paithan.[25] The venue of the commercial activities also shifted from north to south as the ships of the western countries laden with merchandize visited Indian ports of Broach, Lymrika, Supara which became famous for the international trade.

After the decline of Kushanas and the Andharas, no great political power arose in India for sometime. During the Gupta Age there was a brisk trade activity and a number of trading stations as attested by cosmos came into being in the early part of the 6th century.[26] Among the various other ports,Tamralipti, at the head of the Ganga delta remained a very active and

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[24]R.C.Majumdar, Ancient India, Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi,1977, p.216.

[25]For the functioning of the Guilds, See, A.L.Basham, The Wonder that was India, Sidgwick and Jackson, London, 1954,pp.217-18.

[26]R.C.Majumdar(ed.), The Classical Age, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1954, p.593.

prominent due to brisk trade activities and the traders from China, Indonesia and Ceylon came to this port. I-tsing also went from Tamralipti to Bodhgaya along with many more merchants.[27] Kalyan, Chaul, Broach and Cambay were some of the other important ports of the Deccan and Gujrat. Fahien, a celebrated Chinese traveller, who came to India during the reign of Chandragupta II, described at length the presence of many rest houses existed in large towns, as well as on highways for the comforts of travellers.[28] The principal items of export during Guptas were pearls, precious stones, perfumes, spices, indigo,drugs and ivory, while the imports consisted of gold,bullion and coins, copper, tin, lead, silk, coral and horses.[29]

With the advent of Islam, Indian trade was carried by the Arabs who had mainly concentrated on the coastal areas of Malabar. The Arab traders had established cordial relations with the people of the country and had monopolised the commerce of the Arabian sea. The Indian goods were carried by these Arab traders to the foreign land.[30] They strictly kept out of the

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[27]R.C.Majumdar(ed.), The Classical Age, p. 597.

[28]James Legge(ed.), Fahien's Travels in India and Ceylone,Oriental Publishers, Delhi, 1971, pp. 11,14,23.

[29]R.C.Majumdar(ed.), Vakataka-Gupta Age, Motilal Banarsidass, Banaras, 1964, pp.358-359.

[30]Yusuf Husain, Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture,Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1959, pp.11-12.

Indian trade all Christian countries and what ever they got from India, they got through Tartary. The crusaders forced open the door and very soon Venice, Genoa and Florence became important trade centres.[31] The trade of Malabar with Far East and Europe progressed.

Marcopolo, a venetian traveller, who came to India in 1260 has left behind a valuable and useful account of Indian trade. He found Bengal, Gujrat, Cambay, Maabar, Malabar and Somnath humming with traders; both Indian and foreigners. He found Bengal as most extensive and rich province famous for the production of cotton, sugar and "many sorts of drugs are amongst the production of the soil".[32] Malabar according to him was the noblest and richest province abounding in the 'finest and most beautiful cottons, spices and nuts'.[33] Gujrat was famous for the production of spices and indigo. Cotton was produced in large quantities. The other varieties of Gujrat, were bed covers, cushions ornamented with gold-wire and muslins. Embroidery was performed with more delicacy 'than in any part of the world'.[34] The hides of various animals were also exported to other parts of the world. Cambay, according to him was famous for the finest

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[31] D.Pant, Commercial Policy of the Mughals, D.B.Taraporewala, Bombay, 1930, p.11.

[32] E.P.Duttan, The Travels of Marcopolo, Orian Press, New York, n.d., p. 204.

[33] Ibid., p. 305.

[34] Ibid., p. 306.

indigo, cotton and hides.[35] Maabar, was another important province of India which abounds in pearls of various kinds. The main occupation of the people was fishing or fishery. The main item of import from Persia according to him, were the Persian horses (who were held in great veneration and were regularly in demand by Delhi Sultans and later by the Mughals). Describing the trade in Hormuz, he remarked that "merchants come thither (Hormuz) from India, with ships loaded with spicery and precious stones, pearls, clothes of silk and gold,elephants' teeth and many wares".[36] The other notable travellers who have testified the account of Marcopolo were Ibn Batuta and Barbosa.[37] They were highly impressed to see the Indian ports in western and southern India, full of trade activities. Gujrati,Malabari and sometime Bengali merchants controlled the sea-borne trade. Spices, wax, iron, sandalwood, cotton, wheat were exported to wouthwest Asia and China.[38] The picture drawn by the Moorish traveller Ibn Battuta of Indian trade is both detailed and impressive. He remained in India for eleven years and found Bengal Malabar, Multan, Cambay and Maabar (Coromandal Coast) to be the most important centres of trade. According to him Cambay was a

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[35] The Travels of Marcopolo, p.307.

[36] Ibid., pp.283-194.

[37] Mansel Longworth Dames(ed.), A Book of Durate Barbosa, Hakluyt Society, London, 1918-21, Vol. II, pp.56-57.

[38] H.A.R.Gibb, Travels of Ibn Battuta in Asia and Africa(translation) Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1953,pp.228-229.

handsome and flourishing city which was full of foreign merchants. It was the principal sea port of India. The city of Cambay was the finest in regard "to the excellence of its construction". Describing Malabar, Ibn Battuta says,"it is full of spices especially pepper". Calicut was the chief port of Malabar and one of the largest harbours of the world. The merchants from Ceylon, Maldive, Yeman and China flock there in order to buy Indian goods - especially pepper. Chinese ships (junks) called freely at Malabar ports.[39] Bengal was a land of cheapness and extraordinary fertility. It abounds in rice. Describing the cheapness of victuals and other goods of Bengal, he says, "nowhere in the world have I seen any land where prices are lèwer than there and the people of Khurasan call it, 'A hell full of good things". The other speciality of Bengal was the extensive production of cotton goods.[40] According to Ibn Battuta, India was also having a flourishing trade in horses with the Turkish country, Kipchak (Sea of Azoy). In Kipchak, a good horse would not cost more than four rupees or a dinar, while in India its cost was between 100 to 2000 rupees (500 dinars).[41] The caravan which came from Kipchak to India via Gomal pass, consisted x mainly of 6,000 horses. The owners on entering Sind would pay a duty of seven silver dinars and a further

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[39] Travels of Ibn Battuta, pp.228-229,234.

[40] Ibid., p. 267.

[41] Ibid., p.145.

duty at Multan. The caravan of horses, first came to the chief frontier mart of India, Multan and from there would be sent to different places. The Indians did not buy 'race horses' as they would come mainly from 'Yemen, Oman and Far's, and cost from 1000 to 4000 dinars each'.[42]

With the discovery of Sea route to the East, India became the scene of commercial activities of several European nations. The Portuguese were the first to enter the field. For a long time, they maintained the monopoly of maritime trade. Their monopoly rested on the armed might of Portugal and the spiritual sanction given by the Pope. The Portuguese kept the charts of Eastern seas secret and thus prevented the leakage of the information regarding the route.[43]

The Portuguese* took from Arabs as the sole monopolists of Indian trade so as to result they provided a world market for Indian goods, especially spices and muslins on a scale unknown before. Secondly, they introduced into India the products of Europe and China. The trade with China became the essential feature of Portuguese commerce. They also provided the Persian

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[42] Travels of Ibn Battuta, pp. 145-146.

[43] W.W.Hunter, The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Indian Empire, Vol. I, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1907, p.521.

*For details of Portuguese activities, See, Charles R.Boxer, The Portuguese Seaborne Empire 1415-1825, London, 1969.

H0rses to Vijayanagar Empire.[44] The quarrel between the ports of Calicut and Cochin gave the Portuguese their first foothold on the Malabar Coast and they fully exploited the situation to their great advantage.[45] This was also the beginning of the western imperialistic dominance over Asia and Africa. As they(Portuguese) were the first Europeans to touch the Indian soil, they had to encounter sufficient hardships on the people whom they met were strangers - Portuguese, somehow overcame their initial difficulties and settled on the Western Coast. Their policy was now to dominate the Indian seas and they succeeded in it by capturing a sufficient number of fortified harbours from where they could operate and dictate terms. Some of their factories and fortresses were at Diu, Surat, Saman, Bassein, Chaul, Dabul, Goa, Manglore, Cannore, Calicut, Cochin and Quilon. Goa became the capital for their Asian trade. Within a few years, Portuguese power was firmly established in India and other Asian and African countries. They became the sole masters and dispensers of the treasures of the East.[46] Goa became a commercial centre of Portuguese activities in India. Most of the ships laden with Indian goods were sent to Lisbon or elsewhere from Goa only.[47] The other European or non-Portuguese

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[44] K.M.Panikkar, Survey of Indian History, National Information and Publications, Bombay, 1947,p.226.

[45] B.Evans(ed.), Madras District Gazetteers, Malabar, Government Press, Madras, 1951,pp.46-48; Edward Farley Oaten, European Travellers in India, Kegan Paul, 1909, p.59.

[46] W.H.Moreland, India at the Death of Akbar, Macmillan,London, 1923,p.200.

[47] W.H.Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1972, p.7.

ships passing through the Portuguese strongholds were forced to take CARTAZES or Passes. The Cartaz did oblige the ship to call at Portuguese port, both before leaving and arriving to pay duties.[48] A succession of famous Viceroys including the famous Albuquerque extended the Portuguese authority throughout the East India.* Almost every place of importance to the Indian trade fell into their bag. In India, itself there was no power capable of resistance to their steady advance. The Portuguese retained the monopoly of the trade of the East with Europe till the end of the 16th century. However, with small resources they could not consolidate their positions and never became a landpower in the East.[49] The emergence of other European powers namely the English and Dutch gave a severe blow to the prestige of Portuguese. Moreover, their piratical activities greatly enraged the Mughal authorities, who withdrew the concessions earlier granted to them and expelled them from the Mughal court more than once.

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[48] Regarding cartazes or passes, see M.N.Pearson, The Merchants and Rulers of Gujrat, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1976, pp.30-31, 40, 41, 44-45.

*For details, see Alfonso de Albuquerque, The Commentories of Albuquerque Travels by W.Barch, IV vols. London, 1875-84; Also see Tapan Ray Chaudhuri's, Bengal Under Akbar and Jahangir, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1966, pp.234-238-44.

[49] Gazetteer of the Malabar District, p. 49.

The Dutch were the first European nation who broke through the Portuguese monopoly. The Dutch East India Company shot into prominencein 1602. In 1618, they laid the foundation of Batavia in Java as the seat of Supreme Government.[50] In the beginning of the 17th century, Dutch maritime power was the first in the world. Their memorable massacre of the English in Amboyana in 1623 forced British Company to shift from the Eastern Archipelago to the continent of India.[51] While Dutch* were bent upn destroying Portuguese monopoly, they were equally desirous of succeeding to that monopoly. The elimination of Portuguese stronghold in the East was followed by a forced treaty with the native rulers under which the latter agreed to sell their trading products solely to the Dutch. The English East India Company tried to break the monopolistic trading systems of the Dutch. A struggle therefore, ensued between them for supremacy.[52] The Dutch had successfully established their strongholds in Gujrat, Malabar, Coromandel coast and Bengal. They pleased the Mughal authorities by giving handsome presents and monopolised Indian

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[50] W.W.Hunter, Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. I, pp.600-001

[51] Karl Fisher, "The Beginning of Dutch Trade in Gujrat" Proceedings of the 27th Session of the Indian History Congress, Aligarh, 1967, pp.206-213.

*The Dutch started their trade activities from Gujrat in 1602 when the two Dutch factors were sent there. They received a 'firman' from Jahangir in 1618, Karl Fisher.

[52] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the Servants of the East India Company, Vol. III, Sampson Low, Marston & Co., London, 1897-1902, p.7.

trade especially in spices. The Dutch had a very advantageous trade in Bengal too. The goods they brought (Bengal) there were gold, tin, conchshell, elephant's teeth, cloves, mace, quicksilver, vermilion and some cloth which did not sell so well.[53] From Bengal they carried rice, butter, hemp, shipcloth, raw silk, saltpetre, ginghams, sugar, long pepper and borax.[54] In Gujrat also they were carrying a good trade. By 1620, Van Den Broecke had completely settled at Surat and made Surat as his headquarters for the trade activities in the various parts of the country. He also assumed the title of Director for Perisa, Arabia and India. In 1624, a Dutch fleet coming from Mocha first gave passes to Indian ships and later on plundered them. By 1624, the Dutch had established factoreiss at Surat, Broach, Ahmadabad and Cambay.[55] One can safely assume that Dutch were definitely enjoying a privileged position so far as the Indian trade was concerned till their power was successfully challenged by the English.

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[53] Richard Carnac Temple, The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, John Murray, London, 1911, pp.83-84.

[54] Ibid., pp.83-84.

[55] William Foster(ed.), English Factories in India, Vol. I,1618-21, Caiarendon Press, Oxford, 1906-27, p. 37.; Philip Baldaues, A True and Exact Description of the most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar and Coromandal, John Churchill, 1703, 515-17.

For further details of Dutch trade in India, See, Owen C.Kail, The Dutch in India, Macmillan, Delhi, 1981.

CHAPTER II

RISE OF ENGLISH TRADE TO PROMINENCE

The English had begun exploration for a northern passage to India much earlier than the foundation of East India Company. The first English chartered company organised to seek a northeast passage to India was formed by cartographer Sebastan Cabot in 1551. He alongwith twelve councillors contributed a capital of six thousand pounds to discover Cathay, and divers other regions, dominions, islands and places unknown. Sir Hugh Willoughby commanded the first expedition in 1553 but was found frozen dead along with all seventy of his crew in Russian Siberia's ice.[1] Thereafter, the first English men to have visited India was Thomas Stevens who reached Goa in 1579 and became Rector of the Jesuits College at Salsette and did missionary work for forty

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[1]Stanely Wolpert, A New History of India, 2nd edition, Oxford University Press, New York, 1980, p. 139.

years till his death in 1619 at Goa. Father Steven's letter to his father roused considerable enthusiasm in England and led his countrymen to desire direct trade with India.[2]

Intrepid English sea Captain Sir Francis Drake and Thomas Cavendish defeating the Spanish and Portuguese monopoly were also familiarizing the English investments of the rich Indian trade monopoly of the Portuguese. All this induced the English merchants to form the opinion that great profits and natural advantage might be acquired by fiting out ships to follow a direct trade to India. Two English merchants Osborne and Staper subsidized the outfitting of a vessal Tiger and procured a letter from queen Elizebeth addressed to Emperor seeking commercial privileges. John Newberry, Ralph Fitch, William Leeds and James Story sailed abroad the Tiger for Indfa on 13th February, 1583. Their ship was captured off Ormuz and they were taken as prisoners to Goa.[3]

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[2]See the text of the letter dated November 10, 1569 in J.Courtenay Locke, The First Englishmen in India, George Routledge & Sons, London, 1930, pp.19-30.

Edward Farley Oaten, European Travellers in India, Kegan Paul, London, 1909, pp.105-106, says that Elababethan England was attracted towards India on account of Akbar's reputed wealth and the prospect of a brilliant and lucrative return from commercial enterprise in the East while there was scarcity of suitable investments for the savings in Europe.

[3]J.Bruce, Annals of Hon'ble East India Company, Vol. I, p.108.

They (English merchants) secured their liberty through the good offices of Father Stephens and left for Bijapur and thence to Fatehpur where they parted. Newberry according to Fitch started for Lahore to go there overland to Persia. Leedes entered Akbar's service as a jeweller while Fitch visiting Patna, Bengal, Cochin, returned to Europe via Goa, Chaul, Ormuz, Bussrah, Aleppo and Tripoli, reaching London in April, 1591.[4] In 1599, another Englishman, John Mildenhall reached India overland. He wanted to secure some trade concessions for his countrymen from the 'Great Mogol'. He reached Agra in 1603 and was conducted to the presence of Akbar to whom he gave a present of 29 horses and some jewels.[5] The meeting with the Emperor was very much satisfactory and most of his demands were accepted by the Emperor.[6] The foundation of East India Company was a sequel to growing national desire to trade in the East. The successful voyage of Dutch to Bantam, who returned richly laden with spices and other Indian commodities, precipitated the matters. One of the results of the Dutch voyage was to bring into unison of large number of

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[4]Edward Farley Oaten, European Travellers in India, p. 106. ; George Birdwood was of the opinion that Newberry settled down as a shopkeeper at Goa. George Birdwood's Report on the Old Records, p.197.

[5]Oaten, European Travellers in India, pp.110-112.

[6]Ibid.,pp.110-112.; William Foster, England's Quest of Eastern Trade, London, 1933, p.127.

English merchants for a similar purpose, who formed themselves into a association and subscribed a sum of £ 30,133 in support of the undertaking.[7]

The legal foundation of the East India Company was laid by a royal charter of December 31,1600. According to which some 219 original members were formed into a body corporate under the title of 'the Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies'. The Company was further described in the Charter as 'one body corporate and politic in deed and in name, possessing the power to purchase land, to sue and to be sued and to have a common seal which they were permitted to alter at will'.[8]

The Charter again provided that its legal basis would depend on the annual election of Governor, the Court of Committees and the officials and not on the Trading capital. This action of the Government clearly showed that the details of the trade organisation would be worked out by the 'elected body and not by the merchants themselves.[9]

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[7]Shafaat Ahmad Khan, The East India Trade in 17th Century(Reprint), S.Chand & Co., Delhi, 1923, pp. 2.

[8]William Wilson Hunter, The Indian Empire, Clarendon Press,London, 1892, pp.427-28.
Auber gives the date as the 30th December,1600, Peter Auber, Analysis of the Constitution of the East India Company,Assistant Secretary to the Court of Directors, London, 1826, p.ix.

[9]William Wilson Hunter, The Indian Empire, p.428.

The early expeditions of the East India Company were known as separate voyages because for each venture a separate fund was raised. The first fleet of the Company composed of four ships namely Hector, Susan, Ascension and Dragon, while a small ship Gift also accompnied, full of victuals. The entire fleet was placed under the command of Captain James Lancaster, who left England on 13th February, 1601 and arrived at Achin on 5th June, 1602, from where they left for Bantam. The total cargoes of which were composed of £ 28,742 bullion; and goods consisting of iron, tin, lead, broad cloth of all colours, utensiles and certain presents amounting to £ 6,860 for the respective kings of Achin and Bantam. The fleet returned to England in 1603, carrying a rich load of spices mainly pepper.[10]

A second voyage was sent out in March 1604 with the instructions to Henry Middleton, Commander of the Fleet, to go to Bantam in Java, where Lancaster had left some factors and bring home the goods remaining to the account of the First Voyage. Henry Middleton was further instructed to go to Spice Islands. The fleet consisted of the same vessels. The sum subscribed for the

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[10] William Milburn(ed.), Oriental Commerce, London, 1813, Vol.I, pp.10-11 (Introduction); William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Sampson Low, Marston & Co., London, 1897-1902,Vol. I,pp.23-24 (Introduction).

second voyage was of £ 60,450. Captain Middleton arrived in England in May 1606 with a rich cargo of pepper, mutmegs, mace and cloves.[11]

The experience gained in the first two voyages was most valuable and led the company to widen the range of its trading operations. Moreover, the voyages also revealed, that Indian goods, especially calicoes were in great demand in East Indies and could be exchanged profitable with pepper while English goods were either in less or in no demand at all.[12] Lancaster, during the first voyage, captured a Portuguese carrack containing a large number of calicoes which he successfully exchanged for pepper at Bantam and proved the usefulness of this commodity as a trade item of this area.[13] The profits of the first two voyages are stated to have amounted to 95 per cent upon the capital originally subscribed, clear of all charges.[14]

During the third voyage, the Company sent its fleet to India. The fleet consisted of three ships namely the Dragon, Hector and Pinnance-Consent, and was manned by William Keeling, Hawkins and Middleton. The cargo amounted to £ 17,600 bullion

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[11] William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, London, 1813, Vol. I,p.10; Letters Received, I, pp. 28-29, Introduction. Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, 6 Vols.

[12] William Foster(ed.), The Voyage of Thomas Best to East Indies, Hakluyt Society, 1934, London, P.I, Introduction.

[13] Samual Purchas, Purchas, His Pilgrimes; 20 Vols. Voyages of James Lancaster, James Maclehese & Sons, 1905,Glasgow,Iv,p.107.

[14] Letters Received, Vol. I, p. xxviii, Introduction.

and £ 7,280 in goods. The goods consisted of iron, lead, tin and wollens.[15] The profits realized by this voyage amounted to no less than 234 per cent upon the subscribed capital.[16] When the third fleet made ready to sail it was decided that one vessel should be sent to Surat, to establish a factory there by the treaty concluded with the Mughal Emperor, buy calicoes and rejoin the rest at Bantam, by which means writes Captain Keeling, the 'General' of the expedition, they "would lay the west foundation for gain against another year that ever I heard of".[17]

Surat, as a future trade market was chosen for many reasons. As the great entrepot of the Mughal empire on the western coast of India, it was in the words of a contemporary traveller, "a city of very great trade in all classes of merchandize, a very important sea port and frequented by many ships from Malabar and other parts".[18] Thomas Aldworth described Surat as such, "Though the while indies there cannot be any place more beneficial for our country that this, being the only key to open all rich and best trade of the indies, for the sale of our

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[15] Letters Received, Vol. I, p. xxx, Introduction.

[16] Ibid., p. xxx.

[17] Samual Purchas, Purchas, His Pilgrimes, Vol. IV, p. 59.

[18] Letters Received, Vol. I, 1602-13, introduction.

commodities, especially our cloth".[19] In another letter which Aldworth wrote to Sir Thomas Smythe, "Surat is, as it were, the fountain head from whence we may draw all the trade of our East Indies, for we find here merchandize which we can take and sell in nearly all parts of these Indies and also in England. His Majesty will benefit his royal treasury by more than 200,000 crowns every year, besides the advantage to the whole kingdom by the sale of the goods that come from thence especially broad cloth at a higher price than in any other part of India."[20]

Hawkinds landed at Surat in 1608 during the third voyage and was politely received by the local authorities, who however, referred his case to 'Mocrchchan' or 'Mukarrab Khan', the Governor of Surat and Cambay. He (Mukarrab Khan), later on, proved to be the most relentless enemy of the Englisy. Leaving his ship (Hector) at Surat, he decided to meet the emperor Jahangir personally and therefore, reached Agra on April 16,1609 and was conducted to the presence of the emperor who received him cordially. Hawkins gave the emperor a few presents and the letter from James I, the Emperor of England. Jahangir showed great courtesy in receiving and attending to Hawkins and even allowed him to marry an Armenian lady. Hawkins spent two and

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[19] Letters Received, 1602-13, I, p. 238. Thomas Aldworth to the Company from Surat on 25.1.1612.
For summarised version of the separate and Joint Stock Voyages, See, K.N.Chaudhuri's, The English East India Company, the Study of an Early Joint Stock Company, Frank Cass & Co.,London,1965.

[20] Thomas Aldworth at Surat to Sir Thomas Smythe, January 25,1613. William Foster(ed.), The Voyage of Thomas Best to the East Indies(1612-14), Hakluyt Society,London,1934,p.251

half years at Agra as a royal guest, still he was unable to obtain any trade facilities from the Mughal king due to the Portuguese opposition at court and thus, returned unsuccessful to Surat and embarked on board of vessel of Sir Henry Middleton. Hawkin's mission was a complete failure. He had failed to grab from Jahangir even the pettiest farmans he bestowed upon the other European ambassadors. Captain Nicholas Downton writing from Dabul to the Company on 24th February,1611, complained that 'Hawkins had returned from Agra without any Phirman from the king and rather in disgrace. The king had not cared even to reply the letter of the English king'. Thus, they were disappointed in the prospects of trade; their king and nation were in disgrace and there was no alternative but to leave the country.[21]

The fourth voyage to India was under the command of Captain Sharpeigh in the 'Ascension' who was accompanied by Richard Rowles in the union, an old vessel of 400 tons. A subscription of £ 33,000 was entered into. The cargo consisted of £ 15,000 in bullion and £ 3,400 in goods. Sherpeigh was instructed to erect factories at Camba[illegible], Banda, Terrate,Tidore and Priaman. The voyage proved to be unfortunate as Sherpeigh's ship 'Ascension' wrecked off at the Coast of India in 1609 while

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[21] Letters Received, I, pp. 158-59.

he was intending to make for Surat. The Captain and his crew was saved who went overland to Surat. Some men chose to go to Goa and from there to London. So nothing came out of this voyage and everything was lost due to ship wreckage.[22]

The fifth voyage consisted of only one vessel; the expedition sailed under Captain David Middleton on April 20,1609. The cargo consisted of £ 6,000 in bullion and £ 1,700 in goods. Middleton went to Moluccas and Banda where he was vehemently opposed by the Dutch who were in league with the natives not to allow any trade by the English. He, therefore, went to Pulo Aye where he obtained some spices. After landing at Surat, he was refused to have any trade dealings and was immediately asked to leave the port.[23] He, therefore, retaliated by capturing and plundering the Indian ships in the Red Sea and made matters worse for the English.[24] Middleton reached England on November 16, carrying a rich cargo of spices from Pulo Aye and Bantam. The profits made out of this voyage were 211 per cent.[25]

In 1609, the Company equipped the 6th voyage on a scale unknown before, £ 82,000 was subscribed and they built a splendid new vessel, the trade's increase of 1,100 tons. The

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[22] Letters Received, I, p. xii; Milburn's Oriental Commerce, p.13.

[23] Milburn's Oriental Commerce, I, p. 14.

[24] Thomas Aldworth, William Biddulph and Nicholoas Withington to the Company, Surat, 25 January,1612. Letters Received, 1602-13, p. 236.

[25] Ibid., pp. 39, 40, 158.

king himself launched it and gave Sir Thomas Smythe a medal in honour of the occasion.[26] The trade's increase commanded by Henry Middleton, the Peppercorn by Nicholas Downton and the Darling left for the East on April 1, 1610. Their cargo consisted of cloth, lead, tin, quicksilver, ~~lead~~, sword blades, kerseys and red caps. The object of this voyage was to open the new avenues for trade. After landing at Mocha, they were imprisoned and their goods confiscated by the natives. An unsuccessful attempt was made by Turks to capture Darling. Middleton remained prisoner ffom December to May 10, when he along with fifteen others escaped and got on the board of Darling. From 14 June to 19, he blockaded the ports of Mocha and captured a ship from Diu and some Malabaries with other vessels. The use of force by Middleton compelled the natives to return the goods earlier siezed by them and had to make heavy compensations to him.[27]

The 7th voyage was undertaken with a single ship, the Globe, under the command of Captain Hippon. The object of this voyage was to open a trade on the Coromandel coast for calicoes, partly for sale of it in Eastern Islands, where they were in great demand. However, at Pulicat they were obstructed by the Dutch, who were enjoying the complete monopoly of trade. At

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[26] Letters Received, I, p. xxxii, xxxiv, introduction.

[27] Ibid., p. 34, introduction.

Masaulipatam, they traded well after paying 4 per cent custom while Governor wanted to extract 12 per cent. From Masaulipatam, they went to Bantam and took in a cargo and returned to England. The profits from this voyage were nearly 218 per cent on the sum of £ 15,364 originally subscribed.[28]

The value of the exports made by the Company in the years 1601 to 1610 was, in goods and stores, £ 51,673, in bullion £119,202 forming a total of £ 170,695. Therefore, during this period, the exported bullion bore a proportion to goods of a little more than 2 to 1.

The total value of the exports to the Indies in the years 1601 to 1610 was thus:

Bullion		Pound
Goods and		119,202
stores		51,673
Total	£	170,875

Thus, million bore a proportion to goods of 2 to 1.[29]

In 1611, the 8th voyage was undertaken by Captain Saris in three ships, Cloves, Hector and Thomas. They sailed from England in April 1611. After having arrived at Mocha, they were soon joined by Henry Middleton who had returned from Surat. Sir Henry on behalf of the 6th voyage and John Saris on behalf of the

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[28]Milburn's Oriental Commerce, I, p. 17.

[29]Ibid.

8th voyage agreed to take their measures in concert, allowing to the 6th voyage, two thirds and the 8th one-third of all their trading concerns. Acting on this agreement, they stopped all the Moorish ships from entering Mocha, and bartered with them for their commodities in exchange for European goods. Having furnished their business, they set sail for Bantam, where two ships were laden with pepper and spices, while John Saris, in the 'Clove' proceeded to open trade avenues in Japan. On his way to Japan, he stopped at Moluccas but the Dutch did not allow them to enter into any trade agreement. With the natives as they insisted that the islands were theirs by right of contract, and the natives were under perpetual contract to supply them spices exclusively. The capital raised for this voyage was £ 55,947 and it yielded a profit of 211 per cent.[30]

The 9th voyage was undertaken with only one ship which sailed to Bantam in 1612 and from there it went to the Coromandel coast. The capital raised for this voyage was £ 19,164 and the profits were 160 per cent.[31]

The 10th voyage has always been considered to have been of special importance in the early history of East India Company as the Commander of this voyage, Captain Thomas Best

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[30]Milburn's Oriental Commerce, I, p. 18.

[31]Ibid.

was successful in obtaing imperial decree granting formal trading rights which, if it did not guarantee security from the Portuguese at Sea, atleast offered the political safeguards from Mughal authority so long desired by the English.[32]

Following the usual practice, a subscription list was opened for this tenth voyage, and that, as a result the sum of £ 46,092 was obtained. The two vessels employed were the Dragon and Hosiander. The cargo of the two ships mainly consisted of broad cloth, ivory, quicksilver, ledd and iron while a large stock of Spanish reals was provided for the purchase of return cargoes. Thomas Best landed at Surat on September 5, 1611 with his two ships. Thomas Kerridge(who later on became the President of Surat factory) was sent ashore and was given a hearty welcome by the Governor Abdulla Khan. This voyage particularly from the English point of view proved to be of great importance as the commander of this voyage was able to defea t the Portuguese in a few encounters and thus, shattering their image of invincibility before the Mughal Sovereign.[33]

Thomas Aldworth William Biddulp and Nicholas Withington, who came during this voyage showed a great gusto for establishing English trade at Surat and not only that but wrote the letters with

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[32]William Foster(ed.), The Voyage of Thomas Best to the East Indies, Hakluyt Society, London, 1934, p.230.

[33]Ibid., p.2, introduction.

this regard to the Company and Directors, suggesting a complete outline of the trading methods to be pursued in India. After English victory over Portuguese during the tenth voyage, Aldworth wrote to the Company, "Had we now English Shipping here, we might do great good in matter of trade, which is now debarred to the people of this country, having none to deal with them. They all here much wish for the coming of our English ships, not only for trade but to keep them, for as they, say, the coming of our ships will much daunt the Portugueses".[34]

The 11th voyage was undertaken in a single ship, sent out to bringb back the merchants and adventurers left of third and fifth voyage. The sum subscribed was £ 10,669 and the voyage was completed within 20 months, the profit being 320 per cent.

The 12th and last voyage was undertaken in a single ship, the expedition under the command of Captain Newport who also took with him Sir Robet Shirley as the ambassador designate to Persia. They went to Diu, where they were opposed by the Portuguese. They, then proceeded to Tiu and Bantam and returned home laden with pepper. The capital subscribed for this voyage was £ 7,142. The outward cargo consisted of £ 1,250 in money and £ 650 in goods. The profit amounted to £ 133,185 4d per cent.[35]

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[34]Aldworth to Company, August 19, 1614, Letters Received, II, pp.96-97.

[35]Milburn's Oriental Commerce, p. 19.

Thus, the whole of the capital raised for the twelve voyages, in the aggregate amounted to no less than £ 464,284 or upon an average £ 38,690 for each voyage, which sum of £ 464,284 appears to have been invested in the following manner:

Merchandize	...	£ 62,411 or £ 5,201 per voyage.
Bullion	...	£ 138,127 or £ 11,510 per voyage.
Ships, stores, provisions, etc.	...	£ 263,746 or £ 21,979 per voyage.

which roughly gave a profit of 138 per cent per voyage.[36]

It was thus, proved that various sums employed from 1600 to 1612 in all the twelve voyages amounted to £ 464,284 out of which £ 200,540 or 43 per cent was sent out to the Indies in money and goods while the rest was spent in the purchase or repairs of ships, their equipment, provisions and the maintenance of the various factories. In some of the adventures the gains were enormously great, for instance, they amounted to 234 and 218 per cent in the third and seventh voyages.[37]

First and Second Joint Stock Voyages (1613-20)

In the early voyages, the subscribers bore the entire expenses and enjoyed the whole of profits. This arrangement was fraught with difficulties, it was therefore, resolved to relinquish all further concerns on separate voyages, and to open a

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[36] Milburn's Oriental Commerce, p. 20.

[37] Ibid.,

subscription for continuing the trade upon a Joint Stock Account. The duration of stock was purposely limited to four years. The amount of the subscription was £ 418,619 which it was agreed to be divided equally in proportions in each of the four years.[38] However, the E.I.Company had to face twofold problems, during this time, firstly, the company had to do something in order to put the Indian trade on a firm footing as they (English) had suffered considerable hardships due to Portuguese menace and secondly, they had to explore the new markets in India for the consumption of the English goods which did not enjoy much popularity in India due to its expensive nature. Moreover, there was immediate need to come to some understanding with the Dutch East India Company which had grown very powerful and was posing serious threat to the commercial interests of the English in South East Asia and India.

In 1613, began the system of Joint Stock Voyages and the first voyage consisted of four ships under the command of Captain Nicholas Downton, who had already served the company in sixth voyage under Henry Middleton.[39] On the arrival of the English at Surat, they demanded certain facilities including the reduction of custom duty and issuing of a Phirman from the

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[38]Milburn's Oriental Commerce, p.21,

[39]William Foster(ed.), The Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies, Hakluyt, London, 1939, p. xix, introduction.

Emperor Jahangir which was granted to them after some delay. Now a very favourable opportunity for opening up relations with the Mughal Emperor presented itself. The Portuguese in September 1613 captured an Indian ship, coming from Mocha. Though the ship had the Portuguese pass, still they had the audicity to plunder her and carried away the goods worth 70 or 80,0001,imprisoned 700 persons including women.[40] A few months later, the Portuguese again resorted to piratical activities and captured four cargo ships near Surat. Apparently, the intention was to hold them as a pledge until a promise was made by the Mughal Emperor that English should be permanently expelled from this country. But it soon became obvious that they (Portuguese) had overplayed this time. The Portuguese plundered the ships and seized all the commodities including a treasure belonging to queen dowager (Hamila Banu Begum), estimated to be no less than 3 million pounds. When the matter was reported to the Emperor, he got highly annoyed and despatched Muqurrab Khan, the Governor of Gujrat with the royal insignias to make the warlike preparations against the English and to extract compensation from them. The Mughal Commander acting intelligently came to an understanding with Nicholas Downton, the commander of the first joint stock voyage, in order to remedy his own naval weakness. In the fight which ensued, the Portuguese were defeated and routed by the English. Meanwhile the imperial forces besieged Daman and Diu and most of the Portuguese residing there were arrested and even Father

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[40]William Biddulp to Thomas Smith, Surat, 18 September,1613, Letters Received, Vol. III, p. 300.

Jerome Xavier was put under arrest by Muqurrab Khan on the orders of the King. All the favours shown to Portuguese were withdrawn. There was an authoritative prohibition of their religion and Church by the orders of the King. At court, the English now received better attention and were favoured than Portuguese. Now Portuguese opened negotiations for peace and after a great deal of hesitation, the Emperor agreed to the truce.[41]

In 1614, the Company undertook the second voyage on the joint stock. The main motives of the voyage were to removd the dissentions prevailing rather alarming this time between the English and the Dutch in India or elsewhere by calling a joint conference of both the representatives, English and Dutch, in order to sort out their mutual differences and regulate and operate certain trade plans jointly. The English did not agree to this andthe conference ended without any favourable results.[42]

In 1615, took place the third voyage on the first joint stock. On the 18th September, a new fleet from England under the command of William Keeling anchored at Swally and on 26th September Sir Thomas Roe landed at Surat as special

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[41] Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, translated by Alexander Rogers & Henry Beveridge, Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1914, p. 274.

[42] Milburn's Oriental Commerce, p. 21.

ambassador from King James of England to the great Mogul.[43] Of handsome presence and dignified hearing, suave and courteous in manner', yet firm and even imperious when occasion called, his was just the personality likely to impress the eastern monarch.[44] King James heartily approved the company's choice of selecting Thomas Roe as his ambassador, especially at a time when the company's affairs in India were not very smoothly operated and the danger of the Dutch power was looming large. Roe, initially was opposed not by Portuguese or Dutch but by his own people who in his letter to Thomas Smythe(the Governor) showed his resentment that 'my employment is nothing but vexation and trouble; little honor, less profit".[45] It was at this stage that Roe by his tact and firmness alike in dealing with the native authorities and the unruly English factors, and, by his excellent advice on the subject of reorganizing company's factories, had shown how much he had their interest at heart. Roe therefore, sailed with the third voyage of the First Joint Stock. Fleet was commanded by the William Keeling. The ships employed during this voyage were Dragon, Peppercorne, Lion and the expedition. They set sail on January 24, 1615 and reached swally on September 18. On 26 September, Roe landed at Swally

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[43] Letters Received, III, p. 10.

[44] William Foster(ed.), English Factories in India, 1618-21, p.vi, introduction.

[45] Ibid.

Hole, with a salute of forty eight guns, the fleet being decorated with ensigns, flags, pedants and streamers.[46]

Roe and his party set out for Agra on November 1. They halted at Burhanpur, then an important fort and the headquarters of Prince Parviz, who made it the base for his operations in Deccan.[47] Roe, has given a graphic description of the Court of Parviz and described him (Parviz) as a mere 'figurehead'. At Burhanpur, Roe obtained the permission to erect a factory, and sat down to write to the company an account of his progress uptodate.[48] It was not until the 10th January that he was able to present himself at court. He was extremely pleased to meet the Emperor Jahangir, who gave him rousing reception. The King treated him 'with more favour and outward grace than ever was shown to any ambassador'.[49] Roe had an inside of a true statesmanship as he realized that keeping an army or constructing fort in India would be detrimental for the interests of the English East India Company in India. He cautioned them by a word of advice. A war and traffic are incompatible; and the Portuguese and Dutch have ruined themselves in this way. All that is required is a light pinnace of sixty tons and ten guns to keep

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[46] Letters Received, III, p. 10, Introduction.

[47] Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, pp.156-57., Beni Prasad, History of Jahangir, P.260.

[48] The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of Great Mogul, ed. by William Foster, Hakluyt Society, 1899, p. 532.

[49] Letters Received, III, p.11, Introduction.

off the enemy's frigate. In November 1616, Roe accompanied the Emperor to Mandu, the capital of Malwa, from where the emperor was to watch and support the operations of prince Khurram against the Deccan. In October 1617, Jahangir left Mandu for Ahmedabad where Roe, who had gone in advance, arrived on December 15. Early in 1618, the ambassador paid a visit to Burhanpur, returning to Ahmedabad in the May. In September 1618, he left the court enroute for England.[50] On February 17, 1619, he embarked on board the 'Anne' (reaching England in August next.[51]

Roe's embassy has always been regarded as a landmark* in the history of English relations with India . At the time of his arrival, the English factors as he said, in a 'desperate case', threatened by Portuguese, plundered by the local officials and in imminent danger of expulsion, in fact only the dread of the guns of the fleet and fears of retaliation upon native traders had caused the mughal authorities to hestiate in taking vigorous measures towards the end. His energetic demands for justice procured the recall of the Governor of Surat.[52] The

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[50] William Foster, edited, The Embassy of Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, pp.343-44.

[51] For the best accounts of the diplomatic aspects of such ambassadors, see Phanindra Nath Chakrabarty, Anglo-Mughul Commercial Relations, O.P.S Publications, Calcutta, 1983, pp.65-127.

[52] English Factories in India, p. xx, introduction.

* 1618-21
For the details of Thomas Roe, See The Embassay of Thomas Roe to the Court of Great Mogul, Edited by William Foster, Vol.I, Hakluyt Society, London, 1899, introduction.

favour Roe found in the realm of Mughal emperor made him in the language of Terry,"a Joseph in the court of Pharoh, for whose sake all his nation seemed to fare better".[53] In short, if after his departure, Englishmen found in India "free trade, a peaceable residence and very good esteem with that king and people", it was largely due to the character and ability of Thomas Roe.[54] Joseph Salbank, a factor correctly wrote,"My lord ambassador hath managed his place very honourably since he came to the Mughal's court, with the frugal respect of your profit that I believe you could hardly have picked out in a fitter and worthier man for the administering of his place in our whole kingdom".[55]

In 1616, a treaty was conducted with the King of Achin by which liberty to trade on payment of 7 per cent customs on imports and exports and the permission to erect a factory there were also granted. A pamphlet under the title of 'Trade's increase was published in 1616, alleging the company for the

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[53]William Foster,(ed), Early Travels in India, S.Chand & Co., Delhi, 1968, p. 290.

[54]English Factories, 1618-21, p.xi, introduction.

[55]Joseph Salbank at Surat to the Company, Letters Received, Vol. II, p. 230.

regular drainage of bullion'.[56] In reply to this pamphlet, Sir Dudley Digge asserted for the defence of the company's trade. According to him the maximum amount of goods and money exported in any one year was valued as £ 36,000 only, yet the nation saved £ 70,000 in the prices of pepper,cloves,mace and nutmegs for home consumption, and also vastly gained by the re-exportation of Indian commodities.[57] For instance, spices worth £ 218,000 were exported in 1616 besides a valuable stock of indigo, calicoes, China silks, benjaminaloes, etc. If to this direct gain were added, King's customs, and also the employment given to ships as well as mariners in the re-exportations, the sum total of advantage accuring to the nation was undoubtedly very considerably.[58] Besides cinnamon, the company also provided the other spices like pepper which was selling at 85 per pound was now reduced to 2s, per pound. Thus, the cloves worth 450,000 pounds maces 15,000 pounds, mutmegs worth 100,00 pounds were annually consumed in England which was far lesser in price than it used to be before the trade with India.[59]

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[56] Milburn's Oriental Commerce, p. 24.

[57] Ibid., p. 24.

[58] Ibid.,

[59] Ibid.

The cargo in 1614 sent to India consisted of the following articles and amounted to:

	Total Amount
Bays, kersies and broadcloth, dyed and dressed	£ 14,000
Lead, Iron and foreign merchandize	£ 10,000
Treasure	£ 12,000
The Shipping and furniture cost in the same year	£ 34,000
Fare, provision and other extra ordinary charges	£ 30,000
Gross Total	£ 100,000[60]

In 1616, the stock for the next voyage was estimated to be £ 52,087 in money and £ 16,506 in goods, and the fleet consisted of seven vessels, under the command of Captain Pring. They sailed from England in March and arrived at Surat in October 1616 after capturing a Portuguese frigate (battle ship). They sailed for Bantam where they met Dutch in several encounters who had previously burnt the English factory at Jakarta. In subsequent encounters that followed between the Dutch and the English, the English lost five ships.[61]

Thus, the first joint stock undertook four voyages from 1613 to 1616 with a total capital of £ 42,900 out of which:

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[60]Milburn's Oriental Commerce, p. 25.

[61]Ibid., p. 29.

£ 111,499 was sent in money

£ 78,017 in goods

£ 72,544 was spent in ships and victuals.

Twenty nine ships were in all employed and though the cargo of one of the ships, costing only 40,000 reals of eight or £ 9,000 was sold in England at £ 80,000 sterling, yet the total profits earned out of the voyages were not more than 87 per cent on the original subscription.[62] The following table shows the details of Ist Joint Stock from 1613 to 1615[63] :

Table I

Details of Joint Stock from 1613-1615

Financial Year	Received from the Adventures	Exported in Money	Exported in Goods	Cost of Ship
1613-14	£ 106,000	£ 18,810	£ 12,446	£ 272,544
1614-15	£ 107,000	£ 13,942	£ 23,000	£ 272,544
1615-16	£ 107,000	£ 26,660	£ 26,065	-
1616-17	£ 109,000	£ 52,087	£ 16,506	-
Total £	429,000	111,499	78,017	

The sum paid for the four voyages of Ist Joint Stock to the royal exchequer was £ 65,000.[64] The sudden increase in

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[62] Milburn's Oriental Commerce, p. 26.

[63] The most authoritative statement on this point is contained in the report of Jermy Sambrook, the Company's accountant written about in 1654. The other two manuscripts published in 1619 and 1621 gave a different version of the total expenditure, Letters Received, Vol. VI, p. xl.

[64] Letters Received, Vol. Vi, p. 40, introduction.

the export of money for 1616-17 as compared with 1615-16 needs a word of explanation. By the charter of 1609, the amount of coin to be exported was not to exceed £ 30,000 (all in foreign coin or bullion). The motive was to satisfy the general prejudices against the exportation of treasure and secondly, to promote and encourage the sale of English goods in India or elsewhere. But it soon became apparent that English goods were not much in demand in the east and could not fetch the good market. Francis Fetiplace and Robert Hughes writing from Agra on 20th December, 1617, expressed little hope for the sale of English goods in India. They wrote, "this trade will not yield benefit to your worship's expectations, so infinite expenses and charges are depending thereon, whose defraying will require a great stock to be employed".

A table is appended showing the shipping employed in the various voyages made on account of the stock. From this it appears that 29 ships in all were sent out, and of these, four had been lost or broken up, two had fallen into the hands of the Dutch, and fifteen were still in the Indies.[65]

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[65] Letters Received, Vol. VI, p. xii, introduction.

Table II

The Voyages of the First Joint Stock

Years	Ships	Commanders	Sailed	Arrived	How Disposed off
1613-14	Concord	Giles Hawkins	9.1.1614	8.9.1614 (Bantam)	Scuttled at Jakarta 1616
	New Years Gift				
	Hector	Nicholas Downton	28.2.1614 (Gravesand)	15-10-1614 (Swally)	Returned 25 June,1616(Downs)
	Hope				Broken up at Jakarta,1616.
	Solomon				Returned 24 Nov.,1615.
					Captured by the Dutch,25.3.1618.
1614-15	Samaritan	David Middleton	May 1614	13-2-1615 (Bantam)	Lost on the way home,1615.
	Thomas				Scuttled at Jakarta,25-12-1618.
	Thomasine				Lost on shore, Sept,1615
	Advice				
	Attendent	Robert Youart	Nov. 1614	July 1615	Abandoned at Masulipatam,16-9-1619.
	Dragon				Captured by Dutch 25-3-1618
	Lion				Returned in the autumn,1616.
	Peppercorn	William Keeling	24-1-1615 (Gravesand)	19-9-1615 (Swally)	Returned 25-8-1617(Plymouth)
	Expedition				Returned 26-5-1617
1615-16	Defence	Samual Castleton	25-4-1615 (Gravesand)	29-12-1615 (Bantam)	Captured by Dutch 19-3-1617.
	Clove				
	Charles				Returned, June 1617(Downs)
	Unicorn	Benjamin Joseph (succeeded by Henry Pepwell)	3-2-1616 (Gravesand)	25-9-1616	Transferred to New Stock
	James				Transferred to New Stock
	Globe				Returned 23 August. 1617
	Swan				Captured by Dutch 2-2-1617
	Rose				Transferred to New Stock
1616-17	Hope	Christopher Newport	-	15-8-1617 (Bantam)	Transferred to New Stock
	Hound	William Gordon			21-10-1617
	James Royal				
	Anne Royal				
	New Year Gift	Martin Pring	4-2-1617 (Gravesand)	20-9-1617 (Swally)	Returned 29 December,1618 (Plymouth)
	Bull				
	Bee				Transferred to New Stock

Source: Letters Received, Vol. VI, p. 42.

After the expiry of the First Joint Stock, the Second Joint Stock arose in 1617 from a subscription of £ 1,629,040. This joint stock like the former one, was limited to four years duration. The Directors fixed on Surat and Bantam as the principal seats of their trade.[66] During the twelve years from 1617 to 1628, the adventurers sent fifty seven ships of 26,690 tons besides small ships with £ 1,145,442 in money and goods and it raised £ 289,64 in the Indies. Yet this proved to be unfortunate adventure undertaken by the company, due to incessant rivalry of the English with the Dutch and Portuguese for the monopoly of the Spice Trade.[67]

In 1628, on the failure of the attempt to raise subscription fork the second or third joint stock, the system of calling in special subscriptions for particular voyages to Surat and Persia began - £ 130,000 and £ 150,000 were readily subscribed for the first and second adventures while huge profits were distributed among the proprietors of these particular voyages,only 12½ per cent nominal dividents were declared for all the moneys that had been contributed by the capitalists of England for the second joint stock.[68]

The third joint stock, which was raised by the additional subscription,made up a capital of £ 420,700 in all. It was somewhat more fortunate than the earlier one as the two ships,Jonas

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[66] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East,Vol.VI,p.252.

[67] Ibid., p. xli, introduction.

[68] Milburn's Oriental Commerce,p.25;Bal Krishna,Commercial Relations between India and England (1601-1757),George Routledge & Sons, London,1924, pp.72-73.

and the Jewel were lost and inspite of the great charges in India and England for financing the trade with the large sums borrowed at high interest, the adventurers could obtain an advance of 35 per cent on their eleven year's investment.[69] Six years later, the company presented to the Parliament the account of trade, beginning from the year 1600 to the year 1621. The report stated that they had "laden away in all these years out of the realm, as but of the Downs, Holland and other places, but £ 613,681 or £ 29,225 per annum in the shape of foreign coin". They had also shipped out of England, the various English goods like lead, iron, tin and other foreign goods to the value of £ 319,211 or £ 15,200 per annum.[70] Thus, the total value of exports in bullion and merchandize during those twenty one years was £ 932,982 or £ 44,423 bearing the ratio bearing between the money and goods a little less than 2:1.[71] The report further stated that in all the above mentioned years, 36 ships were employed to the value of £ 375,288 and the returned cargo consisted of imported goods which were sold worth £ 2,004,600 in England.[72] The above mentioned estimate was confirmed by Thomas Mun, who calculated the investments

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[69]Balkrishna, Commercial Relations, p. 57.
[70]Milburn's Oriental Commerce, p. 34.
[71]Ibid.
[72]Ibid.

and profits of the company for the first nineteen years and a half in the following manner:

Money in foreign coin exported	£ 548,092
English and Foreign goods exported	£ 292,286
Total in moneys and Wares	£ 840,376

Imported into England

Cost of Goods	£ 356,288
Sale value of goods	£ 1914,600 [73]

In the year 1620, there were laden 10 ships consisting of £ 62,490 in bullion and £ 28,508 in goods forming a total of £ 90,998. In the year 1625,"an abstract of the report to the East Indies, both for exportation and importation from 25 March, 1620 to 25th March 1624" was laid before the House of Commons.

An abstract is given below regarding the ships deployed from 1621 to 1623 along with the bullion and goods:

	Bullion	Goods
1621 on 4 ships	12,900	6,523
	Total £ 19,423	
1622 on 5 ships	61,600	6,430
	Total £ 68,030	
1623 7 ships	68,720	17,345
	Total £ 86,065	
Total Export £ 205,710(bullion),	£ 58,806(Goods)	
	Total £ 264,516. [74]	

[73] Thomas Mun, A Discourse on Trade London, 1626, p.31.

[74] Milburn's Oriental Commerce, p.36.

So during the four years 26 ships were deployed by the company, and the total amount spent (including the bullion and goods was £ 264,516.[75]

From 1618 onwards, English trade was a settled affair in India. They were not only trading between England and the Indies, but had a growing share in the supply of Asiatic merchandize to the southern and western countries of Asia. By 1618, the English had established five factories inthe domain of the Mughal Emperor. They (factories) were at Agra, Ahmadabad, Burhanpur(in Khandesh), Broach and Surat.[76] Subsequently, the English factories were established at Coromandel coast, Western coast, Orissa and Eastern coast.[77]

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[75]Milburn's Oriental Commerce, p. 36.

[76]English Factories in India, 1618-21, p.1, introduction.

[77]The rise of English trade to prominence after 1618 has been discussed at the appropriate places in the succeeding chapters dealing with the progress of this trade at the various provinces.

CHAPTER III

TOWARDS TRIPOD TRADING CENTRES: WEST COAST

Beginning at Surat, the English trade expanded on both east and west coasts. The future trading centres and presidencies at Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, were to emerge slowly from the gradual diversification of English trading activities in the subcontinent. The following narrative shows how the English commercial enterprise expanded, prospered and strengthened itself during the very period of great Mughul glory ending 1707.

Surat

Surat was the first place where the English and the Dutch established trade and erected factories. Surat in the 17th century was the chief port of the Mughal Emperor although the city was seven kos up the river and all goods, both imports and exports, were shipped and landed by boats only. Three kos further, the English had found an ancharage, named Swally,

originally Sohaly.[1] From Swally goods were brought either by boats or by carts. The latter procedure though expensive, was much better than the former as the Malabar pirates remained active on the river and captured merchandise.[2]

Before the advent of the English on the western coast, a very extensive trade was carried on in Surat by the indegenous merchants. From Surat alone sailed every year four or five of kings great ships (two for Achin, two for ormuz, two for Bantom and two for Maccassar and for these parts. Besides there were smaller ships owned by individual merchants coming and going in large numbers and doing flourishing business. After the advent of the English, the trade suffered a great set back, because all the chief ports which were flourishing sometime like that of Ormuz, Mokha, Aden, Dahhol had collapsed. The same was the case of Goa ports. The Indian and Portuguese merchants put the entire blame for this on English and Dutch called them the 'Scourges of the Sea and of their prosperity'.[3]

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[1] H.Yule and A.C.Burnell, Hobson-Jobson's, A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Pharses, ed. by W.Crooke, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1968 (Reprint), p. 883.

[2] Francisco Pelsaert, The Remonstraintie of Francisco Palsaert or Jahangir's India, English translation by Moreland & P.Geyl, Idarah-i-Adabiyat-I Delli, Delhi, 1972, p.39. ; For the details of Gujrat Trade, See Surinder Gopal, Commerce and Crafts in Gujrat, People's Publishing House, Delhi, 1975, pp.127-45, 149-85.

[3] Francisco Pelseart, Jahangir's India, pp. 39-40.

Sir Thomas Roe complained to the Company from Ahmadabad on February 14, 1618 about the existing trade condition of the English at Surat and remarked that "they are weary of us as its indeed we have empoverished the ports and wounded all their trade so that by much persuation of the Governor, the merchants goes to see".[4] The importance of Surat is testified in the several letters of the English factors. For example, "An now concerning this place where (thanks be to God) we are settled, your worships shall perceive that through the whole Indie's there cannot be any place more beneficial for our country than this, being the only key to open all the rich and best trade of the Indies, and for sale of our commodities especially our cloth, it exceeds all others, in so much our hope is you shall not need to send any more money hither, for here and in the neighbour cities, will be yearly sold above a thousand broad cloths and five hundred pieces of Devon Kerseys for ready monies, and being sorted according to our advice herewith sent you, will double itself: Likewise quicksilver, ten thousand weight, Vermillion one thousand weight, will yearly vent at 12 or 13 pound sterling per kintol. Lead some 80 or 100 tons yearly vent at 7 or 8

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[4]William Foster, ed., The Embassay of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Moqul, Hakluyt Society, London, 1899, pp. 500-01.; For the Trade of Gujrat in 16th Century See M.N.Pearson's, The Merchants and Rulers of Gujrat, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1976.

ma. per maund which is 22 or 23 pound per ton. For iron we wish you to send none, for it will not yield the monies to cost in England. As for the commodities of this country viz., indigoes, calicoes, cotton yarn and divers other commodities, will by our computation yield three for one at home at least. Here are divers other drugs wherein we have little experience. Now for the better establishing of this trade here at Surat, if by the mutual consent of the kings of England and Spain it cannot be accorded that our people may have peaceable entrance into this river, then you worships are to provide 5 or 6 good ships which will be very sufficiently able to withstand all the force of the Portuguese can map here so that they may have trade in despite of them for the people stand much more affected to us than to them, as by experience already in this our small business we have proved they having lent soldiers to safeguard our goods by land to the sea side, against the Portuguese. Of these 5 or 6 ships thither to be sent, one or two of them may be hence dispeeded to for England, and the rest may be furnished here hence with commodities fit for the southward, where it commonly yields three for one. Further, we think it fit for your cause to be provided two thousand crooked sword blades of 4 or 5 price per piece, as the bearer hereof will inform you, which will yield you 4 or 5 for one. Wherein you shall have much of other things of greater value(which must be given away in presents) as by experience we have found being destitute of all things needful for like purpose in so much we have been

forced to give much cloth and were fain to pay extremely for such trifles as were brought of the mariners. Also some 10 or 15 pound employed in knives of all sorts, some 2 or 4 dozen looking glasses of divers sorts, some few pictures, a set of cases of bottles with good store of aqua vitae and rose wolis, and other small trifles of which this bearer will inform you ... As for fowling pieces they must small and few. It will be expected by the next shipping that they bring a present for the king, and being altogether delighted in toys that are strange, we think it fitting you send for him a small pair of organ, having here a skilful musician to play on them; likewise a very case of bottles filled with several sorts of strong bottles, two or three pairs of rich gloves, one or two fair looking glasses, two pairs sword blades some fair pictures, and if you send the King's picture, it will be the more highly esteemed, two or three fair spaniels, and a fair grey-hound or two".[5]

In a letter written in January 1612,by William Bidulph from Surat to the East India Company in London, Surat was acknowledged the most beneficial place,being the only 'key to open all the rich and best trade of the Indies and for sale of our commodities,especially our cloth.[6]

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[5]Sir Frederick Charles Danvers(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East,1602-13,Sampson Low Marston & Co.,London,1896-1906,Vol. I, pp.233 & 240.

[6]Ibid.,p.238; Regarding the trade of Western India,See B.G. Gokhale's article, "Some Aspects of English Commerce with Western India,1600-1650", Journal of Indian History,Vol.XXXX, August,1962, pp.269-86.

In an other letter written in October of the same year, Bidulph called Surat the only place for vending our country's commodities' in 'all the Indies and for commodities for England'.[7]

Thomas Aldworth wrote to the company on November 9, 1613 that "he was confident of despatch from Surat of five or six ships during the next three or four months for England and southward". In his view the "whole East Indies cannot yield a better place for your country trade than this".*

In another letter Thomas .Aldworth suggested that besides Surat, Agra should have another factory. For all sorts of Indian commodities, they would go to the places of their manufacture 'esteeming there to be no great danger in the transportation thereof through the country and for inviting the people with their goods to repair down the Suratta, not having been formerly so accustomed".[8]

The Surat factors wrote to Thomas Roe on May 25, 1616, that the main causes of their continuation of their trade were their 'good reception and privileges' and the sale of their (English) commodities. Their 'entertainment' in India 'proceeded not from affection, but rather through fear occasioned by the example of Sir Henry Myddleton'. They further wrote that the

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*Already discussed in the Second Chapter.

[7] Letters Received, Vol. I, p. 301.

[8] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 307.

presence of the Portuguese was of greater importance to India "as they earned more profits through customs than the English ".

Trade at Surat

Herbert Moll found the bazar or the market place of Surat very populous and thronged with Banias and other merchants whom he saw standing with their silken and cotton cloth upon their heads or in their hands exposing the same for the sale.[9] He found Surat port as the 'greatest trade centre' of India.[10]

In the middle of the city, before the castle, the open place was termed as the green castle. Here were laid all sorts of goods in the open-air-throughout the day and with the exception of the rainy season. It was here that the local and European merchants used to place their bales for loading their ships.[11]

There was the Governor of the Surat Castle incharge of the garrison. He was appointed by the Emperor for three years. The Governor of the town was the Deputy of the Viceroy of Gujrat. It was to this gentleman that foreigners applied on all occasions. The Governor decided all matters of importance in consultation with the Qazi, Mamlatmatia and the Kotwal. Qazi

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[9]Herbert Moll, The Present State of Further India, p. 244.

[10]Ibid., p. 243.

[11]Ibid., p. 243.

decided all the civil cases, while the duty of Kotwal was to maintain peace and order in the city and would go thrice a day for the 'general round of the city'.[12]

The Presidency of Surat was esteemed superior to all in India and was the headquarter of the English trade from 1616 onwards.[13] The factories subordinate to Surat in 1629-30 were that of Agra, Ahmadabad, Baroda, Broach and sometimes Cambay. Factories in Persia, at Gombroon (Bandar Abbas) and Ispahan were also placed under Surat presidency. It (Surat) was a big commercial centre of the English trade in India. John Fryer, a surgeon in the service of the East India Company on his visit to Surat in 1674 found it (Surat) an entrepot of the foreign as well as Indian trade. The exports at Surat consisted of silk (from Ahmadabad) indigo(Agra), chints, coarse cloth(Coromandel coast), Baftas (Broach), Calicut cloth (though it took the name from Calicut but was never manufactured there), cotton goods from Coromandel coast, pepper and other spices from Malabar, Saltpetre, opium and various other goods from other parts of the country. While as the imports consisted of quick silver, porcelaine, cowries or sea shells (from Phillipine islands and Siam) Gold and Ivory(from Sumatra in exchange of corn). Drugs and carmenian wool(from Persia)

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[12]Herbert Moll, The Present State of Proper India, pp. 243-44.

[13]William Foster, ed., Letters Received, Vol. IV, p. 301.

were some of the items imported from South East Asia and Middle East. The exported goods from other parts of the country would be added there and then shipped to Europe for sale.[14] Fryer has thrown a good deal of light on the mode of purchasing cloth or calicoes around Surat. He remarked that the places around Surat produced a variety of calicoes but they were not produced in the bulk and were also not cheaper as expected. The English factors directly contacted the weavers or through the Banyia brokers prior to the rainy season and money would be paid in advance so by the time season starts, the English factors would get the 'ordered cloth' well in time.[15] According to Fryer, Dutch too had a factory at Surat. They spent most of the money, earned out of the sale of the spices from Batavia at Surat, in buying coarse cloth at Surat, while the English brought the bullion from England and purchased the Indian goods with it.[16]

According to William Fremlin, an English factor, most of the English or European trade was conducted through the system of barter. "By the end of February, the flat bottomed boats of 100 tons came down to Surat from Lahore laden with Sugar, Sugar candy, nawsaudar(Salamoniac), dry ginger and other

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[14] William Crooke(ed.), John Fryer's: A New Account of East India and Persia being Nine Years Travels, Hakluyt Society,London, 1905-15, Vol. I, p. 219.

[15] Ibid., p. 221.

[16] William Crooke(ed.), John Fryer's New Account of East India and Persia, being Nine Years Travels,Vol.I,Hakluyt Society, London, 1909,p.225.

commodities and bartered away for pepper, tin, lead, spices, broad cloth, dates and coker-muttas.[17] President Methold and Messrs Fremlen, Breton and Bornford at Surat informed to the company on April 28, 1634 that in accordance with the company's orders, large purchases have been made of piece goods and cotton yarn. Those procured at Surat were the best and the cheap, while as those of Baroda and Broach were 'coarser and dearer'. The 'Dutties' and broad baftas of Ahmadabad were few and dear as compared with the former price but were still cheaper by 50 per cent, 'keeping in view the present times'. Saltpetre was purchased instead of pepper, as the latter proved costly. A consultation was held at Surat by Surat factors for the purchase of Deccan pepper. The factors (Wylde, Hoarse and Page) informed from Surat on July 10, 1625 that the Deccan pepper sent from Surat was far better than obtained at any other place. A large quantity of pepper was ordered to be procured by the English factors. The President of the English factory, William Methold entered into a Treaty with Virji Vohra(the merchant prince of Gujrat and a very influential person) regarding the purchase of pepper at Surat. 10,000 mahmudis were deposited with Virji Vohra for the purchase of pepper. Virji Vohra wanted the price of pepper to be fixed at 16½ mahmudis while the English president

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[17]William Fremlen to the Company, May 1, 1636, English Factories, 1634-36, p. 244.

insisted on giving 16 mahmudis for a seer.[18] The consultation further resolved that more saltpetre would be purchased at Ahmadabad and Agra as Dutch were also anxious to buy the same. About 3,000 maunds of Saltpetre was purchased to be transported to England in the next supply from Surat.[19]

On January 2, 1636, the English made a heavy purchase of lead, broad cloth, tobacco, cotton wool and raisins from the Dutch to be shipped to Dabhol. Moreover, about £ 5,000 worth gold was sent to purchase pepper, ginger and gum lac.[20]

John Mandelslo's account of sending English goods in a Caravan. Mandelslo, a German itinerant described that a caravan of English goods was sent from Surat to Ahmadabad which the traveller also accompanied through the request of the English president William Methold. Mandelslo joined the caravan on 30th September, 1638, which left for Ahmadabad, consisted of eighty wagons laden with quicksilver, spices and other goods purchased at Surat. The caravan was guarded by twelve English armed soldiers. The young German traveller was thus, assured

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[18] William Foster(ed.), English Factories, 1624-29, p. 90. For the details of Virji Vohra, the 'Merchant Prince of Surat', See B.G.Gokhale's, Surat in the 17th Century, A Study in Urban History of Pre-Modern India, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1978, pp.137-45, For the details of the English trade at Surat, see pages 149-161.

[19] Ibid., p. 90.

[20] Ibid., 1634-36, p. 149.

that he could undertake the journey without any danger from the 'Rajputs', who frequented the country and lived as robbers. These were described by Mandelslo as 'tories' or highwaymen' who had their haunts in the mountains of Champaner and even defied the authority of the Mughal emperor.[21]

Surat was commonly famous for traffic through all the Asia for silken cloths and for garbaft or the cloth of gold from Persia. Among the varieties of silken cloth were atlas, quanti, soofey's, culgars, alejas, velvets, taftas and satins. Large number of pearls were brought here from Persian gulf. There were also brought to Surat diamonds, rubies, saphires, topazes and other splendid stones from other countries. Agates, cornelians, niganees, desks, boxes neatly polished and embellished could be purchased at Surat at reasonable price.[22] Goods were brought to Surat from capital Agra, Delhi, Broach, Ahmadabad and other cities noted for particular commodities. They were sold in great quantities to Europeans, Turks, Arabians, Persians and Armenians, 'who above any of the rest rravel the farthest'.[23] Surat had also internal trade relations with Masulipatam and Bengal. The goods brought from Bengal consisted of lac and sugar which yielded a good margin of profit.[24]

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[21] M.S.Commissariat, English translator, John Mandelslo's Travels in Western India, Oxford University Press, London, 1931, p.17.

[22] H.G.Rawlinson(ed.), John Ovington's, A Voyage to Surat, London, 1929, p. 131.

[23] Ibid., pp.133-134.

[24] William Foster(ed.), English Factories, 1634-36, p. 178.

Famine in Gujrat

The trade of Gujrat suffered terribly due to a severe famine which broke out in the province in the year 1631. The intensity or effects of famine were so great that it paralysed the entire trade industry of Gujrat, and it could not recover for many years to come. From Swally, the English Factors wrote to the company on December 1631, that on arrival of English factors there, they found all the merchants either dead or sick. The town and the country around Surat was completely barren and devoid of people. No where were seen any traces of life or human beings... Never in living memory such a m event had occured there. "This that was in a manner that the garden of the world is now turned a wilderness, having few or no men left to manure their grounds nor to labour in any profession. The places that had yielded 15 bales of cloth made their in a day hardly yielded 3 in a month".[25]

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[25] William Foster(ed.), English Factories, 1630-33, pp.178-179.

Full and graphic accounts of this terrible calamity which desolated the province of Gujrat, plunged some of its people into cannibalism, and setback production for a whole decade are available in a number of contemporary works. Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey,(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia (1608-67), Hakluyt Society, London, 1907, Vol. II, pp.43-44,262,265-66,275-76; Elliot & Dowson, History of India as Told by her own Historians,Vol. VII, Kitab Mahal, Allahabad, 1963-64, p.24; W.H.Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi,1972, pp.21-23 (Reprint).

Phillip Baldaues, who was a Dutch Missionary in the districts of Malabar and Coromandel in the 17th century, has furnished a graphic account of the trade of Surat in those days. He found the city of Surat, a place of great traffic, with the English and the Dutch having their factories there. They carried their merchandize upon wagons drawn by oxen from Swally road to the city. The traveller 'was of the opinion that it was due to the settlements of these English and Dutch nations that Surat owed its chief increase in trade, and also the presence there of many rich merchants and artisans. These merchants sent their commodities from Surat by Red sea to Arabia, Aden, Mocha, Jedda, Mecca and Ethopia. This rich trade consisted in fine and coarse cloth from the various parts of India (Gujrat, Deccan and Bengal). Besides, the king sent two or three ships of his own to these places dealing in precious commodities. The foreign companies furnished these ships with able seamen and constables for which the Mughal king was obliged to them. However, the Custom officers at Surat gave a lot of troyble to the merchants of these foreign companies. The people of Goa, Dabhul, Bassein, Daman and Dieu also sent their ships to Mocha and some other places in the Red sea. The Banias and Armenians (merchants) used to come thrice to Surat in their light ships laden with all sorts of trifles, which they exchanged for wheat, rice and coffee berries. These ships sailed in March and April for the Red sea and returned in September or October and spent not more than twenty five days in the voyage.

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In March and April, the Malabaris came there, well armed with fire-locks and scimitars. They usually brought with them coarse sugar, cardamom, pepper, coir and cocomuts.

Formerly, the people of Surat used to send every year, one or two ships in May or June to Achin, Tanasser, Queda and the Maldive islands, laden with stuffs and cloths and calicoes and returned with pepper, camphor, cloves, nutmegs, mace, sandalwood, porecelain, Chinese silks, tin, benzoin, elephants teeth and cocomits. The last was the only product of Maldive.[26]

The Italian traveller, Dr. Jameli Careri, who came to India towards the end of the 17th century, called Surat as the 'prime Mart of India'. All nations of the world had trade relations with it. There was according to author, a rich trade going on in all sorts of spices, gold, silk stuffs, fine cotton stuffs and other commodities. There were many rich merchants in the city"having the capacity of loading one full ship for any foreign country from one of his own warehouses". All the rich silks and cloths of gold curiously wrought with figures of birds and flowers, all the brocades, velvets, and taftas and other varieties of cloth manufactured in Ahmadabad were brought to Surat. The finest muslins of Cambay and the curiosities made

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[26]Phillip Baldaeus, A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, John Churchill, London, 1703, pp.505-506,512-13,519,550.

in the most valuable agate were brought to Surat and sent from there to Europe. Excellent white and printed cloths of Broach were also brought to Surat which was a good market for these products.[27]

Thevenot, a French traveller who visited Surat in 1666 has furnished an accurate and graphic account of Surat; its commercial greatness, Besides the stuffs and cloths made in Indies, all the important commodities of Europe as well as those of China, like porecelaine, cabinets, Agates, cornelians and other curiosities were sold in the Surat marts. Thevenot also made a mention of Indian goods which were sold at Surat. They included musk, amber, myrrh, incense, manna, salamoniac, quicksilver, lac, indico, rootroehnas(Chaya root), for dyeing red, spices and fruits. The above mentioned Indian articles were not only sold at Surat but according to the traveller were also sent to the countries of Levant and further to the various parts of the world.[28]

Position of English Traders at Surat

Dr. John Fryer, who was sent from Bombay by President Gerald Augier, arrived at Surat by the year 1674, during the monsoon season. We learn from his accounts, that mercantile

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[27] Surinder Nath Sen,(ed.), Indian Travels of M.De. Thevenot and Jamali Carari, National Archives of India, New Delhi,1949, pp.163-64.

[28] Ibid., p.25.

community as such was not held in high esteem by the Mughal authorities yet the English Company and its servants at Surat commanded good respect and esteem from the ruling classes.This, he, points out, was due partly to the special 'farmans' granted to them from time to time by successive emperors, and partly to the naval supremacy of the English. After giving an account of the various communities at Surat, he says: 'It is time to return to see what grace we are in among this divided multi-trade: our usage by the pharmauns (or charter) granted successively from their emperors is kind enough, but the better because our naval power curbs them; otherwise, they being prone to be imperious, would subjugate us, as they do all others that are harnessed with the apron strings of trade. And treat with us in a more favourable style, giving us the preference before others here resident, and look on us with the same aspect as they do on their great Ombrahs (Omrahs): nobles.[29]

Thus, Surat was a very important and popular commercial centre of Western India. It exported all sorts of piece goods.[30] White coloured, striped for which Gujrat was famous and all the other goods provided by Cambay, besides Chinese, European, Malabar, Bengal, Coromandel,Southern and Eastern commodities of all kinds. It was an entrepot of the country produce as far as Kashmir, Lahore, and Agra. The aggregate gross tonnage of the ships approached the amount of 20,0000 tons yearly.

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[29]John Fryer, An Account of the East India and Persia,pp.288-289.

[30]Piece goods - a technical term for Manchester cotton imported into India was originally applied to the trade of Indian cottons exported to England - Hobson-Jobson, p. 705.

Broach

It is described as a city standing upon a pretty high mountains, surrounded by walls of free stone, and so well built that it may be numbered amongst the strongest places of all the 'indies'. It had two large gates on the land side and two small ones towards the river, through which a great quantity of timber came into the town from distant parts.[31] There was a Mughal guard or garrison posted in the fort, partly because of its military importance and also to collect the custom duty of 2 per cent upon all commodities, entering into the city. The majority of inhabitants were weavers who produced the bafta for which Broach was famous and which were 'finer than any made in the province of Gujrat'.[32]

The lands around Broach, according to Mandelslo were very fertile yielding rice, wheat, barley and cotton in great abundance. In the mountains of the southeast of the town which extended beyond Burhanpur, were found agates from which were made various things like cups, seals, handles for knives and daggers and were carried to Cambay and sold there.[33] From Broach, on the road leading ro Cambay at a distance of twenty

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[31] M.S.Commissariat, (ed.), Mandelslo's Travels in Western India, pp. 14-15.

[32] Ibid., p. 15.

[33] Ibid., p. 15.

two miles was the village of Jambushar, famous for the production of indigo, an industry which flourished till the end of eighteenth century. The indico made here was from fire while at other places from water.[34] The English agent at Broach was also incharge of the factory at Baroda, which was famous for weaving, dyeing, etc. Baroda at this time was fortified with good walls and had bastions and had five gates. The inhabitants were mostly Hindus, who were skilled in the art of seaving cloth. The folouishing village of Sankheda, where Mandelslo paid a visit on his way from Broach to Ahmadabad in 1638, situated 22 miles from Baroda, yielded annually 25,000 pounds of lacm a commodity famous throughout Gujrat. Lac is described as being of a red brown colour in its natural state. But when dried and beaten to powder, it could be given any colour, black, green, yellow, etc. Besides being used as sealing wax, it was also employed adorning and beautifying household furniture such as chests, cabinets, tables, bedstead, etc.[35]

Thevenot, who visited Broach in 1666 has also testified to the availability of cotton goods known as Baftas in the market of Broach which was located at the foot of the hill. The

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[34] Phillip Baldaues, A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar and Coromandal, p. 593.

[35] Mandelslo describes the place as 'Sindic-era, eight leagues from the city' Mandelslo, p. 164.

The name 'lac' is applied to the resinous incrustration formed on the bark of twigs of certain trees by the action of lac-insect, Coccuslacca. George Watt, "Commercial Products of India" being an abridgement of Dictionary of the Economic Products of India, John Murrary, London, 1908, p. 570.

cotton goods or baftas according to the author were very popular in whole of India. The Dutch had also appointed a factor at Baroch whose duty was to clear the goods from the customs after making a certain payment. The goods mainly came from Ahmadabad.

The English after establishing their factory at Surat soon realized that piece goods could be procured cheapter at Broach than at Surat. They, therefore, applied to the Mughal King for the permission to byild factory at Broach. They were granted permission and as a result, they erected a factory in 1616. The Dutch also followed them and erected a factory in 1617. Broach manufactured finest fabrics known for its quality and excellance. They were the best in India or anywhere in the world except those of Bengal.[36]

According to Herbert Moll, 'Broach stands about fifty miles to the northward of Surat. It is situated on a hill and was earlier covered with walls'. It was an important trading centre and the English and Dutch had their agents at Broach.[37] According to Baldaues, "The situation of this city is both very convenient and pleasant upon a hill surrounded by a strong stone wall'. This place was famous'for its manufactories of linen and

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[36]William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, p. 156.

[37]Herbert Moll, The Present State of Proper India, p. 246.

cloths of which they make more here than in any other place of the indies, and they have the best way of whitening the first". The Malabar merchants used to visit Broach every year with a fleet of nine to ten ships in order to buy the goods from here. The majority of inhabitants were of Bania community, who were expert in 'linen manufactory'. The two suburbs of the city were chiefly inhabited by Calico-weavers and merchants. The English and Dutch both had established their factories long time ago.[38]

The English started their business transactions at Broach from 1614 onward. Dodsworth, one of the factors of English East India Company was appointed alongwith others to bring the goods at Broach and then to despatch them to England and Southeast Asia. The English also gave prêsents to Muqurrab Khan, the Governor of Gujrat in order to keep him in good humour, who (the Governor) also expected from the English to talk highly of him when they (English) meet the Emperor. The English liked their stay at Broach as it was a pleasant city with a good prospects of trade. According to Dodsworth, "This city of Baroach is one of the pleasantest situated and strongest fortified cities in those parts, being built upon the top of a

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[38]Phillip Baldaues, A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, pp. 512-14.

hill walled round with a castle and fort commanding the river".[39]

"Broach was well known for the variety of cotton goods of finer quality like baftas, dutties. The length of the baftas at Broach were 20½ covedas, while at other places it was 17½ covedas"

On December 1614, the English factors at Broach purchased the following goods to be shipped to England and Southeast Asia for sale:

<u>For England</u>

2,000 pieces white baftas at 2s 6d per piece.
2,000 pieces white baftas at 4s per piece.
2,000 pieces white baftas at 2s 9d per piece.
2,000 pounds of flat and round indigo.
100 oounds in cotton yarn of several sorts.

<u>For Bantam</u>

100 corge of baftas at 55s per corge.
50 corge of byrams reale at 60s per corge.
200 corge of candikens at 30s per corge.
50 corge of candikens at 25s per corge.
20 corge of treakenes at 20s per corge.
15 corge white baftas from 12 to 16s per piece.

The above mentioned commodites were estimated to be of four thousand pounds and the money, according to the instruction of the company was to be drawn from Master Elkington at Surat. Regarding the choice of indigo to be shipped, Master Oxwick was requested to look into the deal. While x two more factors were appointed to look into the cotton deals and other purchases.[40]

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[39] William Foster, (ed.), <u>Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies</u>, Hakluyt Society, London, 1939, p.103.

[40] <u>Ibid</u>., p.12.

Ahmadabad

Ahmadabad had long been the capital of Gujrat and a centre of industry and commerce. The city was always busy with the activities of traders both foreign and Indians. It was the chief city of Gujrat and the seat of Viceroy. The establishment of an English agency and subordinate to Surat was the result of Captain Best's victory at Swally in 1612.[41] The English had a factory in the middle of the town while the Dutch too had a factory there. The warehouses of Europeans, according to Moll were full of rich Indian commodities.[42] According to a letter written by Thomas Aldworth, the President of English East India Company at Surat on November 9, 1613, Ahmadabad was described as the 'only city of Gujrat' and a big commercial centre.[43] Another English traveller John Jourdian found it in 1611, as one of the fairest cities of India both for its buildings and its beauty. It was the principal city of Gujrat and the 'head quarters of the provincial government'.[44] The Dutch traveller Baldaeus has testified to the commercial greatness of Gujrat and particularly of Surat, Ahmadabad and Broach.

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[41] George Birdwood, Report on the Old Records of the India Office, Allen & Co., 1891, London, p. 209.

[42] Herbert Moll, The Present State of Proper India, p. 247.

[43] William Foster,(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, 1602-17, Vol. II,p.238.

[44] William Foster,(ed.), The Journal of John Jourdian, Hakluyat Society, London, 1905, p. 172.

Describing Ahmadabad as situated on the banks of Sabarmati, the author remarked that the city was both strong and populous and fortified with a wall having round turrets and twelve gates. He found the streets of Ahmadabad quite broad.[45] The English were having a very lucrative trade in satins, cotton and indigo besides various other commodities.[46] The famous village Sarkhej, which was about five miles from Ahmadabad was the most astonishing example of indigo production of 17th century. The town though not populous was considered the best for the production of indigo due to the 'fatness of soil'.[47] The indigo produced at Sarkhej was made up in the form of cakes and was flat, different from Biana indigo which was round, and made up in balls.[48] The English were having a good trade in indigo at Ahmadabad. Purchase of indigo was made either in cash of in barter. Sometimes, cash was sent directly from England on ships or funds were obtained by exchange of rials into rupees. In 1618, John Browne at Ahmadabad tried to procure a good quality before ships arrival.[49] In the year 1619, much indigo was

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[45] Phillip Baldaues, A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, p.506.

[46] See the author's research paper on "Ahmadabad and Cambay in the Seventeenth Century", Journal of Historical Research, Vol.XVII, Ranchi University, Ranchi, 1974.

[47] William Foster, (ed.), The Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies, p. 111.

[48] Ibid., p. 111.

[49] William Foster(ed.), English Factories, 1618-21, pp.7-8, 84, 100.

purchased at Ahmadabad. Sometimes the sense of rivalry between the English and Dutch would lead the hike in undigo prices at Ahmadabad or elsewhere as happened in 1637, when Dutch were found paying more money than English in order to frustrate the attempts of the English.[50]

When Thomas Roe accompanied Emperor Jahangir to Ahmadabad, he found there a large party of English merchants carrying on an extensive trade.[51]

Phillip Baldaues found in Ahmadabad many commodities like girdles, turbans, gold tissues, silken stuffs, satins, tapestries, opium, gum, lac, boarax, preserved ginger, salamoniac and indigo.[52]

Pietro Della Valle was in Ahmadabad a street which was fair, long and very broad and was full of shops belonging to various merchants. It was called as the bazar-i-kalan or the great market.[53]

Tavernier found in Ahmadabad the carpets of silk and other silk goods were manufactured there. He was of the opinion that Ahmadabad was an important centre for silken clothes and considerable trade in silken goods was carried on there.[54]

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[50] William Foster (ed.), English Factories, 1634.36, p. 142,

[51] William Foster(ed.), The Embassay of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, 2 Vols. , Hakluyt Society,London, 1899,(Vol. I), pp. 530.

[52] Phillip Baldaues, A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, pp.505-506.

[53] G.Havers,English translator, The Travels of Pietro Dalla Valle into East Indies and Arabian Deserts, Hakluyt Society,1892, p.50

[54] V.Ball,Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India,Macmillan, London,1889,Vol.II, p.3.

Mandelslo, a German traveller, who was in Ahmadabad in October 1636 has given an accurate account of the various products of Ahmadabad. 'There is not' says Mandelslo, in a manner any nation, nor any merchandize in all Asia which may not be had at Ahmadabad, where particularly there are made abundance of silks and cotton stuffs. They also make there great quantities of gold and silver brocades, but they put too much thin lace into them, so that in goodness and substance they come not near those of Persia though some of them amount in the country to eighteen crowns the piece".[55] The other varieties of silks produced at Ahmadabad at this time were satins, velvets of all sorts of colours, taffetas and carpets on grounds of gold, silk or cotton.[56] Among the other articles of commerce, were silk and cotton cloth, sugar, honey, lac, opium, borax, ginger, saltpetre, salammoniac and indigo. Besides these musk and ambergris were also available in the capital, though they were not produced in Gujrat. Ambergris was sold at forty mahmudis or eight crowns per ounce. Mandelslo also visited Sarkhej and found that best indigo was made there. Thus, Ahmadabad was a great commercial emporium where foreigners were engaged in lucrative trade.[57]

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[55] M.S.Commissariat(ed.), Mandelslo's Travels in Western India, p.26.

[56] Ibid., p.27.

[57] Ibid., p. 27.
"Ambergris(grey amber) is a substance of wax found floating in the Indian ocean and also as a morbid secretion in the intestines of sperm whale which is believed to be the origin. It is highly valed in perfumery", See Mandelslo's Travels, p.27n.

Cambay

Cambay was one of the oldest, largest and most renowned seaports of the western India. When Jahangir visisted the place, he found it no longer accessible to large ships which had now to unload at Goga on the neighbouring firth.[58] All travellers from Ptolemy onwards who visisted the port of Cambay have attested to its great wealth, fame magnificence and flourishing trade. According to Ain, the streets of Cambay were spacious with gates at the ends, which were closed at night. The buildings were lofty, built of bricks and roofted with tiles. Ivory bracelets, agate cups, chaplets and rings were manufactured in abundance. Many shops in the town were stuffed with aromatic perfume, spices silk and ivory mamufactures. Suburbs larger than city sprang up all round. The population consisted chiefly of Hindus.[59]

According to William Bilburn, "The place which gives its name to the gulf is the seaport of Ahmadabad, the capital of the province. It was formerly a place of great trade and most of the Europeans had their factories there. The Dutch erected their factory in 1620. Large quantities of piece-goods mamufactured at Ahmadabad, and cotton were anmually shipped from here to Bombay. Cambay was well known for cornelian stones.[60]

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[58] Alexander Rogers and Henry Beveridge,(trs.), Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol.II, Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1914, p.416.

[59] H.S.Jarret(tr.), Ain-i-Akbari, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1891, Vol. II, pp.239-40.

[60] William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, p. 154.

Pyrad de Laval, a French traveller who came to India in the middle of 17th century has given a wonderful account of Cambay and its flourishing trade. According to the author, this port being 'one of the greatest and richest of all the coasts of India where merchants resort from all quarters of the world'.[61] It retained its glory and fame as a most popular commercial centre of Gujrat from ancient times. It was the home and nursery of all that was the best in India. There were manufactured all kinds of cotton and silk goods, perfumes, innumberable varieties of goods made of ivory, bed-steads of all colours, works of art made of coral, as well as agates, cornelians and other precious stones, delicate cushions quilted cloth, canopies of delicate workmanship,shields made of tortoise shells which were "wrought and inlaide very workmanlike", fair signets, reings, handles of knives and beads of white as milk-stone which were sold in all parts of the world".[62] But the principal riches of Cambay remarked the traveller, consisted chiefly of so silk and cotton stuffs, 'wherewith everyone from the Cape of good hope to China,man and woman is clothed from head to foot'.[63] The other varieties

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[61] Albert Grey(tr.), The Voyage of Francois Pyrad of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil, Hakluyt Society, London, Vol. I, 1888, pp.250-51.

[62] Ibid., p. 248.

[63] Ibid., p. 248.

of cotton and silken goods were cotton cloths made of 'snowlike whiteness' and very 'delicate' and superior, coarse cloth, pillows, coverletes pinked with much neatness and artistically made, the other variety being painted and patterned cloth and all type of silken stuffs were also manufactured at Cambay.[64]

According to Pyrad again, no people in the world know so much about pearls and precious stones as that of Cambay. Even at Goa the goldsmiths, lapidaries and other workmen occupied with the finer crafts were all Banias and Brahmans of Cambay who owned their own shops and streets.[65] According to the learned traveller again, "In short, I could never mean an end of telling such a variety of mamufactures, as well in gold, silver, iron, steel, copper and other metals as in precious stones,choice works and other valued and rare materials. For they are all cunning people and owe nothing to the people of the west,themselves enduced with a keener intelligence than is usual with us and hands as subtle as ours, to see or hear a thing but once, is with them to know. A cunning and crafty race not, however, fraudulent nor easy to be defrauded. And what is to be observed of all their manufactures is that they are both of good workmanship and cheap. I have never seen men of wit so fine and polished

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[64]Albert Grey(tr.), The Voyage of Francois Pyrad of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil, p. 247.

[65]Ibid., p. 249.

as we these Indians". Infact, he went on "the Portuguese take and learn from them than they from Portuguese and that they come fresh to Goa are very simpletons till they have acquired the airs and graces of the Indies. It must then be understood that all these countries of Cambaya, Surat and others(in the region) of the river Indus and of the Grand Mogor, are the best and most fertile of all the Indies, and are, as it were, nursing, other providing traffic and commerce for all the rest. The people both men and women are there more cultivated than elsewhere; these countries are the mart of all the ships of India and there living is better than anywhere else".[66]

The other important commodity available at Cambay remarked Pyrad was indigo or anil which attracted the attention of English and Dutch to Cambay as it was considered to be the 'prize commodity' for the European buyers. In 1614, Edmond Hamden, Humprey Elkinton,Richard Pitt were appointed the factors incharge of the Cambay trade whose job was to conduct the business transactions and supervise the affairs there. They were instructed by the company to test the purity of every commodity purchased at Cambay before sending it to England, but to their(factors) utter dismay they found the Portuguese opposition too much who gave substandard revenue to the authorities. They had chosen Cambay because of its nearness to

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[66] Albert Grey(tr.), The Voyage of [illegible] Francois Pyrad of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil, p.249.

Ahmadabad and Sarkhej from which place they bought considerable quantity of indigo and other commodities by caravans every week.[67] They used to send merchandize from Cambay to Mozambique, a place with which they had considerable trade.[68]

In January 1615, when English merchants like Elinkton and others went to Cambay, they could purchase nothing but some carpets, quilts and conserves and a little indigo. They discovered that on account of differences between the Mughal authorities and the Portuguese there, the merchants and artisans of Cambay had left the city for other places. As a result of war between the two, the trade of place had declined to such an extent that the local merchants stopped bringing merchandize like piece goods, silks and indigo to the city. This had led to a considerable increase in the prices of these commodities. In 1614, English factors (including Nicholas Downton) decided to appease the Governor of Gujrat Muquarrab Khan by giving suitable presents in shape of curiosities as he had long been intent of getting them.[69]

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[67] William Foster(ed.), Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies, Hakluyt Society, London, 1939, p. 39.

[68] Abbe Carre, The Travels of the Abbe Carre in India and the Near East, translated by Lady Fawcett and edited by Charles Fawcett, 3 Vols., Hakluyt Society, London, 1947-48, Vol. I., p. 136.

[69] William Foster(ed.), Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies, p. 113.

On November 1614, the following goods were purchased:

Commodity	Total Cost
Indigo, 1100 churles	11,000 (L)
4,000 pieces of Baftas at 3s per piece	600 (L)
2,000 pieces of Baftas at 4s per piece	400 (L)
2,000 pieces of Seminoes at 6s per piece	600 (L)
2,000 pieces of Seminoes at 8s per piece	800 (L)
1,000 pieces of coloured calicoes at 18d	075 (L)
1,000 pieces of chints at 2s 6d per piece	125 (L)
250 pieces of shashes at 5s per piece	62.10 (L)
100 pieces of Shashes at 8s per piece	37.10 (L)
75 pieces of Shashes at 10s per piece	37.10 (L)
50 pieces of Shashes at 15s per piece	37.10 (L)
25 pieces of Shashes at 20s per piece	25.00 (L)
Total	£ 13,801.20s [70]

[70] William Foster(ed.), Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies, p. 95.

The names of the above mentioned cloth has been discussed in the Chapter dealing with the Experts (Textiles).

In the 17th century, Cambay was a renowned centre of trade and commerce and most of the Europeans had their factories or business dealings at Cambay. After every ten or twenty days, remakked De Laet, 200 carts left for Cambay laden with all kinds of merchandize.[71] Most of the inhabitants were merchants, rich banias or master craftsmen. Baldaeus witnessed the Gujarati or Bania merchants there 'much to traffic, and very quick in their dealings".[72] Alexander Hamilton, an English traveller had the acquaintance of one merchant, Abdal Gafur, who alone drove a trade equal to the East India Company. He used to 'fit out' in one year more than 20 sails of ships of the tonnage between 300 to 800. He had hiw own stock worth £ 25,000 and also carried on considerable inland trade.[73]

The French traveller Thevenot found in 1665 the shops of Cambay full of aromatic perfumes, spices, silken and other stuffs. There were also found in shops the great number of ivory bracelets, agate cups, chaplets and many other articles.[74]

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[71] De Laet's, The Empire of the Great Mogol, ed. and translated by John S.Hoyland, annotated by S.N.Banerjee, D.B.Taraporevale & Sons, Bombay, 1928,pp.19-20.

[72] Phillip Baldaues, A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar and Coromandal,p.415.

[73] Alexander Hamilton, A New Account of the East Indies being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton,edited by William Foster,Vol.I,p.147.

[74] Surinder Nath Sen,(ed.), Indian Travels of Thevnot and Careri, p. 18.

Alexander Hamilton also attested the presence of cornelian stones and agate as 'no where found in the world'. Of cornelian they made rings and stones for signets and agate, cabinets, intire store except the lids'. Hamilton saw there some of these 14 or 15 inches long and 8 or 9 inches deep valued at 30 or 40 pounds sterling. They also made bowls of several sizes of agate and spoons and handles of swords, daggers and knives and buttons and 'stores to set in snuff-boxes of great value'.[75] Hamilton found the trade of Cambay flourishing till 1686. Nine years later, Captain Evory, a pirate disturbed the 'trade and tranquility of the town with four small ships' taking one of the ships belonging to Mughal emperor, 'with a great booty in silver and gold and Mahometan lady'.[76]

According to Mandelslo, a German traveller, who was in Cambay on October 21,1638, remarked, the majority of the inhabitants of Cambay were Hindus who were so engaged in trade and carried on an extensive business with Achin, Diu, Goa, Mecca and Persia, they exported to these places all sorts of silk and cotton stuffs and brought back in exchange gold and silver in the form of ducats, sequins and rials.[77]

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[75] Alexander Hamilton, A New Account of the East Indies being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, edited by William Foster, p. 143.

[76] Ibid.

[77] M.S.Commissariat, Mandelslo's Travels in Western India, pp.41-42.

Thus Cambay was particularly famous for the production of varieties of cotton and silken cloths and had considerable internal and external trade in the same. Calicoes of all sorts were made there and exported to Europe, Asia and Africa.[78] The English were trying to establish their trade in cotton, silks and indigo through the good offices of the Governor Muqurrab Khan who was least hesitant in accepting presents from English in order to allow them certain trade concessions at Cambay. Similarly, quilts made there were also exported to Europe and South East Asia.[78]

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[78]William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. III, p. 35.

Bombay

The marriage of King Charles II with Catharine of Braganza (May 1661) was an event of great significance for the English in the East. They received Bombay as part of the infanta Catharine's dowry in India.[79] Bombay was given not merely as a wedding gift, but "for the express purpose of enabling the English king to defend the Portuguese settlements in India from the Dutch.[80] The East India Company took no steps to make the alliance known to its servants in India but the news leaked and was reflected in the letter given below, written from Surat to Masulipatam on December 15,1661.

> "We are friends with the Governor(of Surat) though, its noe matter if we are out, our Royall king being marryed to the infanta of Portugall, and in dowry, besides a vast summe of ready mony hath Goa and many other places,Twelve shipps are coming out and 4,000 men which we have letters allready of from Allepo, every day we waite the confirmation"[8]

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[79] According to the terms of treaty of White Hall,23rd June,1661 article 11 with a view to the improvement of the English commerce in the East, the Portuguese monarch ceded the port and island of Bombay with all its rights,profits and territories. By 13th article, English merchants were guaranteed the same privileges of trade at Goa,Cochin and Diu as the Portuguese themselves. William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1661-1664,Clarendon Press,London,1923, p.123.

[80] William Wilson Hunter, A History of British India,Longman's Green and Co., London, 1900, Vol. II, p. 190.

[81] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1661-1664, p.29.

In another letter written from Surat to the Company on March 26, 1667, reference is made regarding the inhabitants of Bombay who during Arab's attack on Bombay, ran away "leaving the place to be pillaged and ruined by fire. This incident is duly recorded in Gerald Aungiers report of 15 December, 1673 - which says, "About the midle or centere of the fort in the Gove:nor's house, built formerly by the Portugalls but was burnt by the Arabs of Muscat when they surprized and took the island from the Portugese in anno 1661. Soe that when the English tooke possession of the island there was little more, than the walls left, but since it cam into the companies hands it hath bin much repaired".[82]

That the Bombay in the succeeding years rose to great heights and became an entrepot of the commercial activities of the English in India and Portuguese resented it is reflected in a letter written by Thomas Maynard, the English Counsil at Lisbon states that the news of the cession of the island of Bombay reached Chaul about two months before the English fleet appeared, "at which the inhabitants of Chaul

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[82] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India, 1661-64, 132n.
The chief feature of the volume 1665-67 of the English Factories contains an information regarding the early history of Bombay - its transfer to English, the steps taken by the Governor Humprey Cooke to organise the administration and fortified the island from the Dutch attack, the arrival of Gervase Lucas as Governor and the temporary rule of Henry Gary, which lasted till the island was finally taken over by the East India Company, William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India, 1665-67, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1925, Introduction.

and Bassaim murmured , saying the King of Portugel did not understand what a considerable place he parted with and that he was deceived by his ministers, therefore they resolved to oppose the delyvery of it to English and to that purpose raise 500 men".[83]

Bombay was finally handed over to the English on 23rd September,1668 with military honours. The President of Surat became the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Bombay, but contimued to reside at Surat and administer the new 'possession' through the Deputy Governor. The Company resolved to strengthen the place by fortying so as to 'resist a potent enemy by sea and land'.[84]

The Company's servants in Bombay in during the year 1677 suffered terribly due to spread of cholera where 400 out of 500 English men perished and were buried there. Even Sir John Child refused to join his appointment of second in counsil at Bombay 'in terror of climate'.[85]

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[83]Public Records Office; State Papers, Portugal(Vol.VI, f214) Letter quoted, William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India, 1661-64, p.135n.

[84]William Wilson Hunter, A History of British India, Vol. II, p. 196.

[85]Ibid., p.198.

In 1669 Sir George Oxenden died and was succeeded by Gerald Aungier who is hailed as the founder of Bombay. He decided to make Bombay a place of safety for shipping and trade. He proved to be an efficient and capable administrator. In 1670, he had shown a good deal of courage against Shivaji's second attack of Surat and saved company's goods from confiscation.[86]

The chief English import into Indiawas bullion, so a mint was established by Aungier in 1672 at Bombay to turn it into the most profitable form of current currency. Silver does not seem to have been mentioned and minted till 1675. In 1676, Charles II authorised the mintage at Bombay of rupees and other coins, bearing the royal arms but none came into circulation till 1678. Aungier's efforts of issuing coinage did help the trade of Bombay to grow.[87] Though the piratical activities of Malabaris, Marathas and Siddis greatly hampered the growth of trade, yet it rose to be the best naval station on the Indian coast and within a few years, its population rose from 10,000 to 160,000. The revenues increased threefold, and the

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[86] Streynsham Master, the agent of Company for 'Coast and Bay' showed the exemplary courage in facing Shivaji's assault on the Company's headquarters at Surat, R.Burlow & Henry Yule(eds.), The Diary of Sir William Hedges During his Agency in Bengal, Vol. II, Hakluyt Society, London, 1677-1889, pp. 226-29.

[87] A consultation of 29th November fixed the name of coins at Bombay as Gold coins - Carolina, Silver coins - Anglina, Copper coins - Copperoon, Tin coins - Tinning, Charles Fawcett(ed.), The English Factories in India,1670-77(New series), Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1936,pp.53,182.

company decided to send one half of its ships and goods to Bombay without touching at Swally marine(Surat).[88]

Aungier proposed to the court of directors as early as 1671, to make Bombay their head quarters in India and the permanent seat of the President, a proposal not carried out till long after he had passed away.[89] Aungier died on 30th June, 1677. He (Aungier) was greatly responsible for converting Bombay into a most convenient naval station and a popular trading centre of Western India after Surat. He has been praised for his great efforts by persons like Alexander Hamilton and John Fryer, two important personalities of the English East India Company. His successor Rolt* was a common place official, "who could not do much about English trade in Bombay". In 1682, two brothers of remarkable characters succeeded in its counsels - Sir Josia Child at home and John Child in India.[90] Josia Child

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[88] William Wilson Hunter, A History of British India, Vol. II, p.225.

[89] The Surat Council to the Company dated 3rd February, 1671, Forrest's Selections from State Papers, Bombay, Home Series, Vol. I, p.50, William Wilson Hunter, A History of British India, Vol. II, p.226.

90 *Alexander Hamilton records that "the name of Mr. Aungier is much revered by the people of Surat and Bombay. John Fryer also expressed similar sentiments about Mr. Aungier, John Fryer's A New Account of East India and Persia being Nine Years Travels, 3 Vols. ed. by William Crooke, Hakluyt Society, 1909, p.66.

*Rolt was President of Surat and Governor of Bombay, 1677-82. Henry Oxendon was Deputy Governor of Bombay, William Wilson Hunter, A History of British India, p. 228n.

the Chairman of the Company at London was a man of great abilities and big potential. He believed in the policy of firmness, and independence, and if needed, a policy of reprisal against the Mughal Empire. He believed in the following objectives: (a) the withdrawal of the English factory from Surat, (b) concentrating and shifting the English trade from Surat to Bombay, a really 'ideal place for future transactions' and a better naval station, (c) seizing the Indian Shipping at Sea in retaliation for the oppression done to English trade in the Mughal dominions. So in Western India, Bombay took precedence over Surat which was relegated to second rate place. In 1684, orders were given by the Court of Directors for the effective defence of Bombay by troops fortification and armed vessels to be stationed in the harbour.[91] In their defence directors wrote "though our business (in Bombay) is only trade and security, not conquest which the Dutch have aimedat, we dare not trade boldly nor leave great stocks, 'where have not the security of a fort'.[92] In 1686, Josia Child* was again elected Governor of the Company

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[91] William Wilson Hunter, A History of British India, Vol.II, pp.233.

[92] Ibid., Vol. II, p.232n.

* The temures of office of two brothers syncronise as follows: Sir John Child, President of Surat and Governor of Bombay 1682-90, Josia Child, Governor of Company at Home, 1681, 1682, 1686, 1687, Deputy Governor 1688-1699, Ibid., Vol. II, p.228n.

and in 1687, Bombay became the chief seat of English under his brother John Child.

Bombay in coming years rose to be a great trading centre and produced a variety of goods including cotton goods, tobacco, coir, coconuts and other goods. The English Company also made tremendous efforts to sell their goods at Bombay but with little success. The ships Sampson, Bombay Merchant, Humprey and Elizabeth from England reached Bombay on October 4, 1669 and landed goods and passangers. Among other things they were asked to give full encouragement to the trade of the place. For that purpose they were asked by the Company to allow freedom from customs to persons of 'whatever nationality', on all imported and exported goods for a period of 5 years from Ist January, 1679. Further, from the end of 5 years, all manufactures of calicoes and wrought silks, and all cotton wool and 'throwne silk', were to be exported and imported customs free, and also all bullion and gold and silver, jewels and precious stones of all kinds, pearls, bezor, musk, amber and ambergrccee shall for ever free from paying and custome or other suty, either imported or exported, or giving and making any accompt for the same; and throwne silk to be gree invards".[93]

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[93] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1668-69, p.239.

Another important item of trade was tobacco. The English factors Young and Adams sent their report from Bombay On February 22, 1669. "They informed the President and Council at Surat that had invited tenders for the tobacco monopoly for the year and were hopeful of receiving 11,000 zerafins (Asharfis) for it". In the next letter of March 17(written by Adams, Young and Coates), they stated that the tobacco monopoly for the ensuing year had been formed out for 11,600 zerafins, "with a fresh conditon that the other merchants might tobacco for export to adjacent places".[94] The successful tenderers for the tobacco trade were the three Brahmins inhabitants of Bandra while their securities had been furnished by four Portuguese of Mahim. The term was for a year from April 18. They had to pay equal quarterly instalments. They had to sell the tobacco at the same rates prevailing in neighbouring portuguese territories.[95] The other important commodity of export to England and other parts of the South East Asia was cloth, given a great encouragement by the Company's servants and for the development and progress of the cloth industry, weavers from neighbourhood were called to Bombay.[96] In a letter

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[94] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1668-69, p.219.

[95] Ibid., pp.217-22.

[96] Ibid., p.65.

of October 6, 1663, Goodier and his colleagues incharge of Bombay administration sent a report to the President and Council at Surat. The report ran as: "They had informed ourselves of Chaul, Thana and Bandra concerning the weavers of silks and stuffs. There were none at Bandra and many in Thana. In Chaul, there were 700 families who made atleast 5,000 pieces of taftas and several stuffs yearly. They (factors) had no doubt that the weavers of these two places would "draw thither to the inriching and ennobling of this island".[96] In another letter written from Bombay, it was learnt by inquiries at Bandra that calicoes could be obtained there at the rate of 10 pieces daily. Patterns were sent of a cloth called 'Taupe'. Each piece was to be 20½ covid long and about one covid broad, and was to cost Rs.25, unbleached.[97] On 29th April,1669, Young wrote a letter from which appears that some weavers had been sent from Surat to reside at Bombay.[98] In another letter of June 9, it was suggested by Young and Adams that some washers and beaters should also be sent to Bombay. It appears that weavers from Surat had already produced some piece goods.[99]

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[97] William Foster (ed.), The English Factories in India,1668-69, p.67.

[98] Ibid., p. 224.

[99] Ibid., p.228.

As desired by the Company, weavers were specially invited to settle, in order to establish the local manufacture of cloth at Bombay. This proved to be successful as in 1671, 100 weavers arrived at Bombay but in 1673, the coming of Dutch fleet caused considerable inconvenience and alarm and some of the weavers did not return to Bombay. Again in 1676, difficulties were found in getting weavers to settle in Bombay. All important efforts were being made in establishing the textile industry that was eventually to become one of Bombay's chief industries.[100]

The majority of Hindu merchants in Bombay consisted of 'Banias', "who are the merchants of these parts and desire to build houses in this island, in expectation his majestie will order the trade of these parts to this port which is the best harbour, where ships may enter and ride safe all seasons".[101]

By April 1671, distinct progress was made in the weaving of cloth on the island. In April Giffard reported that 20 more weavers had come; and Aungier estimated their total immigration of late at 100. When Chown took his seat in Council in June, he was put incharge of the 'warehouse and the weavers'; as he had experience in this line at Broach. In November,Giffard toldt the company that 'the weavers daily increase', and that

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[100] Charles Fawcett(ed.), The English Factories in India 1670-77, (New Series), Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1936, p.xli(introduction)

[101] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1665-67, p.292.

he expected to send some very good samples of their cloth by the next shippment". Some cloth was also sent to Surat. The only impediment to its manufacture appears to have been the need for cotton yarn and warp. On one occasion, the former had to be obtained from Kalyan-Bhivandi on account of the non-arrival of an expected supply from Surat.[102]

During 1672, three homeward bound ships, Massingberd, Falcon and Antelope called at Bombay on 16th January and were despatched within 48 hours. They were so fully laden that only seven of the 25 bales of Bombay cloth "that had been got ready for them were actually shipped".[103]

In 1673, inspite of many indrances to trade, it now began to show signs of considerable improvement. The number of weavers was also increasing, but many of them may have run away in the panic at the end of December due to the arrival of the Dutch fleet. The war had also hampered weaving so that only 42 bales of Bombay baftas were sent to Surat for being further despatched to England. Surat Council reported that Bombay cloth was as good as that of Navsari(Gujrat) in quality, though not so cheap, inview of the expence of accommodating weavers at Bombay.[104]

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[102] Charles Fawcett(ed.), The English Factories in India,1670-77, p.37.

[103] Ibid., p.39.

[104] Ibid., p. 56.

The Council's profitable sale of coir at Surat had ceased owing to severe competition by merchants who imported vast quantities from other places. This resulted in lowering up the price and the monopoly of the disposal of this product was given up in June 1673.[105]

The revenues of the island showed some increase, thus, the customs, tobacco and arrack farms fetched about £ 1,000 than before but the expenditure was more than double.

But the European goods were not much in demand in Bombay and their trade was at low ebb. Giffard reported that there was no market for European commodities. He hoped that Aungier would be able to contrive how to dispose of a large quantity, but pleaded that 'our merchants can't dive into the means of doing this, as times now stand being all in such a distraction that merchants dare not buy or sell the European goods".[106] There was practically no demand of European goods in Bombay or elsewhere.[107] Thus, we see that Bomay's trade suffered sometime due to Dutch, Malabaries and others but it continued getting momentum in the later half of the 17th century and became one of the most important naval and trading centres of Western India.

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[105] Charles Fawcett(ed.), The English Factories in India.1670-77, p.56.

[106] Ibid., p. 75.

[107] Ibid., p. 42.

CHAPTER IV

TOWARDS TRIPOD TRADING CENTRES: COROMANDEL COAST

The name Coromandel originally written Chormandell and pronounced with Ch soft, has long been applied by the Europeans to the Northern Tamil country or to the Eastern coast of the Peninsula upto the mouth of the river Kistna, sometimes to Orissa.[1] It extended from Menar(an island lying off the northwest coast of Ceylon) to beyond Naraspur Peta, where the Orissa coast began. The extent of the Coromandel has been differently described by writers. Marcopolo, who came to India in the 13th century considered the area of

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[1] Henry Yule and A.C.Burnell, Hobson-Jobson's Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, ed. by William Crooke, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1968,p.257 (Reprint).

Coromandel as Mabar.[2] Italian authors like Bartolomeo have called as Ciomandala. The word is a corruption of Cheramandala or Chola mandala; the country of Cholas, an ancient Tamil race of the kings reigned at Tanjore. The terms Coromandel was applied to the coast from Calimere to Kistna and sometimes to Orissa.[3]. Some of the important places of Coromandel where Europeans and particularly English were having factories were: Vizigapatam, Bimliapatam, Komarlau, Vira Vasram, Palakollu, Madapollam, Naraspur, Warrangal, Hyderabad, Metchlipatam, Vetapalem, Nagleswanch, Makhapet, Navalpet, Padapolle or Petapoli or Nizamabad, Karedu, Calavoy, Armagaon, Pulicat, St. Thome, St. Fort George, Negapatam and Tuticorin.

Vizigapatam (Vishaka-Pattam)

On the coast of Ginglee (between Coromandel and Orissa coasts), a branch of the English East India Company was settled at Vizigapatam about the middle of 17th century. In 1689, the Mughal monarch Aurangzeb and the English were at loggerheads and as a result all the English goods and 'ware-houses' were seized by the Mughals and most of the English residents were put to death.[4]

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[2] E.P.Duttan, The Travels of Marcopolo, Orian Press, New York, n.d., p.307.

[3] Henry Yule and A.C.Burnell, Hobson-Jobson's Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, p.256.

[4] Henry Davidson Love, Vestiges of Old Madras, 1640-1800, II vol., London, 1916, p. 12n.
On 13th September, 1689, under the general orders of Aurangzeb, his local officer in Telingana had seized the English factory at Vizigapatam, killing three of the factors and carrying the rest to Chicacole. A little later, their Masulipatam factory was also seized, Diary of Fort St. George, 10th Oct, 1689, Madras, 1923, quoted in Jadunath Sarkar, History of Aurangzeb, M.C.Sarkar & Sons, Calcutta, 1924, Vol.V, p.333.

Bimliapatam was situated 18 miles northeast of Vizigaptam. The Dutch were carrying trade there and had erected a factory as mentioned by Streynsham Master, an agent of the English during his visit to this place.[5] Komarlau was near Golconda in the Vizigaptam district. It was a famour centre for the manufacture of beetliha cloth known as Comerweleu.[6] Viravasaram, in Bhimvaram taluk, and Godawari district was 40 miles northeast of Masuliptam. An English factory subordinate to Masulipatam was established in 1635 and for several years had a resident chief. However, in 1661, there was only one person appointed to look after by the company.[7] John Marshall records that 'Verasheroni' had an old and decayed factory but in former times, a great centre for the cloth production. Moreover, the cloth from Metchlipatam and other adjacent place was brought at Viravasram. In 1674, the factory was pulled down and shifted to some other place and subsequently, used as a store house for company's goods till 1702.[8] Streynsham Master on his visit in 1679 found this place as ideal for the manufacture of cotton goods like Salampores.[9]

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[5]Richard Carnac Temple, Diaries of Streynsham Master, John Murray, London, 1911, Vol. I, p. 44.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Shafaat Ahmad Khan,(ed.), John Marshall in India,being his Notes and Observations, Oxford University Press, London,1927,p.3.

[9]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Diaries of Streynsham Master,Vol.I, p.44.

Polical or Palakolla was situated 5 miles south of Naraspur town and seven miles inland from Madapollam, was the first settlement of Dutch on the Coromandel coast. They opened a factory in 1652 and made it their head quarters for a long time. They founded here indigo factories, iron works and weaving industries. According to Streynsham Master, the Dutch rented this town from the King of Golconda for storing the ordinary cloth.[10] The Dutch dye blue cloth at Palakollu and for this purpose they had more than 300 jars. They also made printed cloth at Palakollu.[11]

Madapollam - It was 40 or 45 miles northeast of Masulipatam. It is now the northern suburb of Naraspur in Naraspur taluk, Godavari district.[12] As early 1662, an attempt was made to found a factory at Madapollam by the English but it was only after a few years that the trade was in full swing as subordinate to Fort St. George. Fryer wiring 1673, spoke of it as a sanatorium for the factors at Masulipatam and remarked that the 'English had a wholesome seat there'.[13] It was a flourishing

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[10] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, p. 171.
The Dutch obtained free possession of Palakolla in 1676,in return for a valuable present made to the King of Golconda. Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol.II, p. 164n.

[11] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 297n.

[12] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 158n.

[13] William Crooke(ed.), John Fryer's New Account of East India and Persia, Hakluyt Society, London, 1909, Vol. II, p.1. See also J.F.Richard, European City States on the Coromandel Coast, Studies in the Foreign Relations of India, P.M.Joshi and M.A.Nayeem(eds.), Hyderabad.

and manufacturing station where Thomas Bowery paid a visit.[14] John Marshall on his visit in 1669 found that English had built a 'majestic house' near the river side. The place gave its name to fine kind of white piece-goods manufactu-red there.[15] Streynsham Master, an agent of East India Company visited Madapollam on 12th April,1679 and held the consultations with Christopher Hatton and Richard Mohun. According to which the local merchants of the town were called and asked to provide the cotton goods like ordinary Salampores, Ginghams and long cloth at the 'old fixed price'. They also agreed to provide percollas, izarees, dungries provided they were given an advance of 3,000 pagodas while the rest of the money could be paid after the goods were supplied.[16]

Cotton Goods provided at Madapollam

1,000 pieces of ordinary long cloth
2,500 pieces of fine long cloth
2,000 pieces of ordinary Salampores
750 pieces of fine Izar Ginghams.[17]

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[14]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowrey's : A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal,Hakluyt Society, London, 1905, pp.100-101.

[15]Ibid., pp. 101-102.

[16]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, p. 163.

[17]Ibid., p. 269n.

Christopher Hatton, in a letter dated 29th December, 1676, informed the Company that 150 bales of cloth were ready at Madapallam for shipping them off to England. It was also informed that an equal proportion of each sort of coarse and fine cotton goods was sent through boats to the ships namely Eagle, Johanna and Falcon and Surat Merchant and the tonnage be made according to the following:

		Distribution of bales
The Eagle	525 tons	50 bales.
Johanna	575 tons	49 bales
Falcons	380 tons	36 bales.
Surat Merchant	390 tons	37 bales.
Total tons	1870 tons	172 bales[18]

At the consultation held at Masulipatam on 13th March, 1679, where the English factors resolved that Madapollam merchants be reminded for the procurement of ordinary cloth and for this purpose 9000 pagodas were already given to them as an advance and the remaining were to be given after the 'conclusion of the contract'. "They may bedismissed and directed to use all dilligence and expediance for the carrying on that work and they may be useful to secure their weavers, that they be not seduced away by the Dutch, who, the Council are informed doe designe a great investment this year in these parts".[19]

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[18]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p. 98.

[19]Ibid., Vol. II, p. 166.

For the further account of Coromandel coast, see Tapan Raychaudhuri's Jan Company in Coromandel, The Hague, 1962.

On 8th January,1680, St. Master and party reached Madapollam again and business was transacted there. The merchants 'were induced to agree to a settled contract for goods to be provided.[20] The agreement and contract made by the Agent and Council with the Madapollam merchants for the investments to be made there for the account of the honourable East India Company. The merchants who were called for the finalization of the contract were Gurala Palliujal, Gopa Linganna, Konda Shambu, Golla Mullaya, Durgasi Janganna, Keti Narapappi and Gudi Jogi. Ther merchants agreed to provide the following cotton items:

Ginghams - 3 threads 40 covids long $2\frac{7}{4}$ covids broad colour brown

Salampores ordinary 29¼ covids long White

Longcloth 72 covids long $2\frac{1}{8}$ covids broad brown colour

Salampores fine 32 covids long $2\frac{1}{8}$ broad brown colour

Parcolas 14½ covids long $2\frac{1}{8}$ broad Brown colour

Izaris 16 covids long $2\frac{1}{8}$ broad white

Dungris 24 covids long 1¼ broad brown colour[21]

Regarding the payment of advance, it was agreed to pay half or 2/3 of the amount as an advance in August after the arrival of ships from England while the remaining was to be paid

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[20]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, p. 374.

[21]Ibid., pp. 376-77.

after the delivery of goods. The contract would remain in vogue for many years to come.[22] In 1679, the contract was signed between the merchants and the English factors and following goods were to be provided:

Long cloth, fine Salampores, Percolas, Izars, Dungris, were provided "at the abatement of 8 per cent. While other cotton goods were long cloth fine 72 covids long 2½ covids broad, ordinary long cloth, ordinary salampores and three threaded ginghans of 40 covids. Long cloth ordinary 72 covids long 2 covids broad(white). The Council paid 9000 pagodas as an advance according to the terms of contract and 2000 pagodas were paid to the merchant namely Kollapali, Narasu, Gopa Linganna, and Konda Shambhu, who agreed to provide the goods within six months not later than 13th March.[23]

Golconda - It was a fertile country with large resources, the capital Hyderabad was at that time the centre of the diamond trade, not only of Asia but of the world.

Thomas Bowery, who visited the place in the middle of 17th century drew a very sanguine picture of the trade and the products of Golconda. It supplied all sorts of calicoes, saltpetre, carpets of all kinds, raw and wrought silks and 'rich diamonds' but no diamonds could be dug without the prior consent

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[22]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, pp. 376-77.

[23]Ibid., Vol. II, p. 167.

of the king who was the owner of all the mines.[24] Many Europeans, were engaged in the lucrative trade and had also entered into the king's(kind of Golconda) service as gunners and marksmen.[25] The other important feature, adds Bowery was its number of Saraig which were specially designed for the comforts of travellers at the distance of ten to twelve miles.[26] The English and Dutch were engaged in a considerable trade there. The merchants paid 2 per cent duty while bringing goods inside into Golconda. Tavernier remarked that the whole kingdom of Golconda abounded in rice, corn, cattle, sheep, poultry and other necessaries.[27] The diamond mines in Golconda were under the control of the King's of Golconda from 1500 to 1686.[28]

Sultan Hassan, the ruler of Golconda issued a firman to the English which declared, "we will and command that whatsoever quantities and qualities of goods and merchandise, gold and silver they (English) bring by by sea to Masulipatam, that it be free from all manner of customs and impositions whatsoever,

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[24] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, Hakluyt Society, Cambridge, 1905, p. 111.

[25] Ibid., p. 110.

[26] Ibid., p. 118.

[27] V. Ball, Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Macmillan, London, Vol. I, p. 150, 1889.

[28] Ibid., Vol. II, p.454.

and that they have free liberty to export the same or dispose of in any part of our dominions, accordingly as it stands with their own convenience, rice, paddy and other merchandize which they bring from abroad either by land or sea for their own use or to sell, and other sort of goods whatsoever, they buy or sell 'to be free from all manners of customs and impositions'.[29] The main exports of Golconda were cotton goods, iron and steel, Indigo was sent to Persia, cotton yarn was sent to Burma from Golconda, while the volume of imports was substantially smaller.[30]

Narasapur

It was situated on the Western bank of the river Vasistha or southern branch of Godavari. Its northern suburb is Madapollam.[31] In 1611, the English Company despatched Captain Hippon in the ship Globe to open trade on the Coromandel coast. He was accompanied by Peter Williamson Floris, a Dutch in the employment of the company. The Dutch, Peter Floris was authorized to conduct all commercial transactions. Floris has left behind

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[29] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, pp. 344-46.

[30] W.H.Moreland(ed.), Relations of Golconda in the Early 17th Century, Hakluyt Society, London, 1931, pp.xix,xx,Introduction.

[31] Ibid., p.36n.

an interesting account of his voyages. Naraspur had an excellent harbour for ships of the largest size and was well known for its docks for building and repairing of large vessels.[32] The material used for ship s was found in abundance and the labour was also very cheap. The ship Globe was refitted here.[33] According to Alexande Hamilton, 'Next to Metchulipatam is Narispore where the English had the factory for long cloth, for the use of their factory of Metchulipatam, when they manufactured chintz there. It also affords teak timber for building and has a fine deep river, but a danger-ous Bar, which makes it little frequented".[34] According to Streynsham Master, Naraspur was under masulipatam. Naraspur, Madapollam and other neighbouring places on the Coromandel coast were famous for the variety of cotton goods. The Dutch too had an iron foundary at Naraspur as early as 1665.[35]

Warrangal

In Telegu, it was known as 'Orungallu' sent and supported Hyderabad in cloth manufacturing which was further

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[32] W.H.Moreland(ed.), Relations of Golconda in the Early 17th Century, p.xvii, Introduction.

[33] The Ship Globe was refitted at Naraspur so as to be a 'far better ship than when she first came out of England.William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Sampson Low Marston & Co., London, Vol.II, 1901, p.41.

[34] William Foster(ed.), A New Account of East Indies; Being Observations and Remarks of Alexander Hamilton, London, 1930, Vol. I, p. 37.

[35] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, pp.272n and 297n.

exported to foreign countries from Hyderabad.[36] Hyderabad produced quantities of Chintz and other varieties of calicoes. The Dutch had a factory there.[37]

Vetapalem in Baptala taluk in Kistna district, was a town of greatest trade for calicoes of all kinds. The town was known for the production of fine cloth. When Streynsham visited the town (19th March, 1679), it was the market day and he saw in bazar cotton yarn and fine calicoes besides other victuals like grain, fruits, etc. People from Metchulipatam would often come to buy goods there.[38]

Naglewanch was situated 32 miles inland to the west of Masulipatam and had a big reputation for the manufacture of Salampore and long cloth.[39] The Dutch had a factory there and factors in residence, the chief being Jacob, Corbessier in 1676.[40] Padapolle or Petapoli later on termed as Nizampatam was a coast town, thirty six miles southwest of Masulipatam and 48 miles north

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[36] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I,p. 272.

[37] Ibid.,

[38] Ibid., p. 135.

[39] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1642-45, p.137.

[40] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p. 266n.

For detailed study of the textile trade or Coromandel coast, see J.Brenning's, The Textile Trade of 17th Century,Northern Coromandel: A Study of a Pre-Modern Asian Export Industry, Winconsin University, Madison, 1975.

of Pulicat.[41] The English had a factory there and stored Saltpetre. The Dutch also had a factory there. There was a small island in the mid of river where 'Chaya root' for dyeing cloth was found in abundance and considered best in the coromandel coast.[42] Various kinds of cloth, both woven and painted were made here. The currency mostly used were pagodas, fanams and cash. One pagoda was equal to 15 fanams and one fanam was about 20 to 24 cash. The place was famous for printed or paterened cloth. The English ship Globe anchored here in 1612 and a factory was erected five years later. It was dissolved in 1623 and resettled in 1697.[43] Streynsham Master reached there on 4th April,1679 and transacted a large amount of business, mostly commercial. The first matter of importance was to invite the local merchants and a contract was signed between the Company and local merchants. However, the samples produced by them were found to be inferior in quality to those previously accepted at Masulipatam. After much persuation Peddapalle merchants agreed to provide a large quantity of fine goods at

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[41] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21, p. 41n

[42] W.H.Moreland(ed.), Relations of Golconda in the Early 17th Century, pp. 54-55.

[43] Ibid.; Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p. 53 n.

10 per cent less than the prices charged at Masulipatam in 1678, 'provided that one half or one quarter of the money was paid to them in hand'[44]

Prizes of Petawoli Goods in 1679

Commodities	Price
Alacha(Alachah or Ilacha) piece goods Plane 2 cubit broad and 30 cubit long	17¼ Pagodas per corge.
Rumals	23 Parodas per corge
Saserguantes	23 Pargodas per corge
Collowaypoos	18 Pagodas per corge
Salampores(Salempoory chints)	27½ Pagodas per corge
Salampores	25 Pagodas per corge
Percolas(Per collaes),2 covids broad 15 covids long	25 Pagodas per corge
Izaris,2 cardis broads broad 16 cubits broad	25 Pagodas per corge
Dimyati 2 cubits broad 19 cubits long	35 Pagodas per corge
Dimyati 3 cubit broad 19 cubits long	3 Pagodas per piece.
Dyaper (Diaper) 3 cubits long,18 cubits broad	3 Pagodas per piece

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Metchlipatam

This coast town of Madras presidency was sometimes vulgarily called Machlipatan or Machli bandar or simply Bandar and its name explained in Hindi as Fish town.[46] It was also

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[44]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p. 80.

[45]Ibid., Vol. II, pp.143-44.

[46]Henry Yule and A.C.Burnell, Hobson-Jobson's Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, edited by William Crooke, p. 561.

called as bandar which in Persian meant a port not a town. It was known as 'fish town where the abundance of fish were supplied to many towns and cities in India. The place retained its name till late in 17th century.[47] Metchlipatam was very populous. It was a large town situated in a low 'Quagmire place'. It was 'very compact, having in it several high and handsome houses, but all made of wood, except few.[48] The town had a "commodies Scituation" which caused many Christians to resort to the place for settlement there".[49]

The English had established their factory in 1611, at Metchlipatam which was destroyed later on and was re-established in 1620, removed to Armegaon in 1620 and again after a lapse of twelve years restored by the firman of king of Golconda, Abdulla Qutb Shah.[50] The English factory at Metchlipatam was nothing sort of a manufactory but comprised merely a warehouse, offices and residential accommodation for the factors and their guards. The trade consisted of a few items from Bantam and Europe while the exports were textile goods like calicoes,chintz and muslins. The calico or long cloth was sent to England and other

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[47] W.H.Moreland(ed.), Golconda in the 17th Century, p. 6.

[48] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, pp.60-62.

[49] Shafaat Ahmad Khan(ed.), John Marshall in India, Being his Notes and Observations,p.52.

[50] William Wilson Hunter, History of British India,Vol. II, Longman's Green & Co., London, 1919, p. 74.

goods to Java.[51] It thus, became a Central place for the merchandize activities in these parts. The city was considered to be an ideal place for its pleasant weather and the fertility of land. Many Europeans had become the residents of this place and were engaged in the lucrative trade.[52]

Phillip Baldaues, a Dutch traveller who visited Metchlipatam in 17th century, remarked that both English and Dutch had established their factories at Metchlipatam. It was a big trade centre. There was also a residence of English Governor who paid an annual tribute to the King of Golconda. It was, the traveller says an important centre for trade as goods from Moluccas, China, etc., were sold there at 'very reasonable price'.[53] There was also a considerable internal trade as the goods from Surat, Cambay, Goa, Orissa, Bengal were brought and sold there.[54] The Dutch factory was established in 1606. In about 1616, there lived 8 to 9 persons in this factory.[55] Many Europeans had taken to the King's service as gunners and marksmen while others were engaged in the lucrative trade.[56]

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[51] Henry Davidson Love, Vestiges of Old Madras,1640-1800, Vol. I, London, 1916., p.12.

[52] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's, A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal,pp.110-111.

[53] Phillip Baldaues, A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, John Churchill, London, 1703, p.589.

[54] Ibid.,

[55] Shafaat Ahmad Khan(ed.), John Marshall in India,Being his Notes and Observations, p.52.

[56] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.) Thomas Bowery's, A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal,p.110.

The other notable feature of the Metchlipatam was that it was nicely connected with a 'net of sarais or inns' meant for the travellers stay. A serai was located at a distance of 10 to 12 miles and 'first come first served' remained the principal mottoo of the working of Serais.[57]

The trade of Metchlipatam was very extensive and carried both by land and sea. The trading class consisted either of Muslims or Banias.[58] Ships would sail every year to Pegu, Tannessry, Bengal, carrying a rich cargo of variety of cotton goods, glass, iron, tobacco, cotton yarn and shells.[59] Ships set sail to Achin, Priaman, Queda and Perak carrying a variety of printed cloth and rice bringing back Sulphur, Silk, tin and some of the Gujrat cloth.[60]

Several of the inhabitants of the town were great merchant adventurers who transported vast stocks of goods in their own ships or on freight in English ships. There was a great concourse of merchants from Goa, Orissa, Bengal and Pagu.[61] A large number of Persians were also settled in the town.[62]

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[57] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowary's, A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.110.

[58] W.H.Moreland(ed.), Golconda in 17th Century, 19.

[59] Ibid. Cowries were mainly brought from the Maldive Islands, p.74n.

[60] Ibid, p. 19.

[61] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowary's, A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p. 106.

[62] Ibid., pp-71-72.

Dr. John Fryer, a surgeon of East India Company, who visited Metchlipatlam in June 1973 remarked that this place had trade in all kinds of calicoes, saltpetre, carpets of all kinds, raw and brought silks and diamonds. But no diamonds could be unearthed without the permission of the King of Golconda.[63] Fryer went to the shore in a boat. These baots according to him were as large as 'our ware-Barges' and almost of 'that mould, sailing with one sail like them but padling with padles instead of spreads and carry a great Burthen with little trouble'.[64]

An English merchant Christopher Hatton wrote from Metchlipatam on 9th January,1677 to Streynsham Master giving an account of the trade of Metchlipatam. This account was based on his experience of those parts for over 20 years as he had first arrived there in 1657. On his arrival then he had found the place very flourishing. Twenty sails of ships belonging to the local merchants were employed constantly on voyages to Arracan, Pegu, Tenasserim, Junkceylon, Mallaca,Johora,Achin, Mocha, Persia and the Maldive Islands. This trade was carried on in all sorts of calicoes, cotton yarn, printed cotton goods of paintings of different sorts, iron, steel, all kinds of grain. They also imported many commodities which were sent to Bijapur and Golconda.

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[63] John Fryer's, A New Account of East India and Persia being Nine Years Travels, edited by William Crooke, Vol. I., p. 76.

[64] Ibid., Vol. I., p.79.

This flourishing trade continued till 1661 when the Dutch established their factory at Golconda. They began to keep stores of all sorts of commodities and deliver the same to the merchants that came to that place, 'and thereby first occasioned a decay of trade' there. More damage to trade was done by the King's action of leaving the management of the kingdom to a Persian named Mir Jumla who rented "out his conttrey to such as would give most; and they, to raise the summes, by which means grown double to the former rents, oppressing the people, have now reduced this place and indeed all the countrey to this low condition, it now appears in". At that time (1677) the whole trade and support of that place depended on the English and Dutch companies whose usual investment consisted in long cloth, fine and coarse salampore cloth, beetilas of divers sorts, in the varieties known as Muri, gingham, parkala, alacha, etc., and all the products of Bijapur and diamonds of Golconda, and all the products of Vijaynagar. Christopher Hatton wrote further for the procurement of any sort of calicoes they had to give advances, many months before and this required 'care and circumspection those so entrusted'.[65]

Metchlipatam was known for the manufacture of a great varieties of cloth in the 17th century. The place afforded many fine qualities of cloth for the foreign market. Among the varieties of cloth were all sorts of plain and coloured calicoes, Chintz

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[65] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, pp.113-114.

and cloth of quilts.[66] A letter of August 1616 written by Captain Anthony Hippon and the merchants of the 7th voyage to the company said that "Metchlipatam and Padapalle were sufficient to bring us more cloth than your worships shall possibly vent for".[67]

On August 8, 1675, Streynsham Master, an Agent of the East India Company for 'Coast and Bay' came to Metchlipatam and held a meeting with English servants of the Company there. It was resolved that a provision of the large quantities of ordinary cloth viz., 10,000 pieces of long cloth and 20,000 pieces of Salampores were ordered to be procured. The Council reposed full faith in the honesty of local merchants.

The calicoes provided at Metchlipatam were 10,000 pieces of ordinary long cloth, 20,000 pieces of Salimpores.[68] The local merchants who were called at Metchlipatam were required to appear before the Council whose members sat in the factory premises and probable rates were discussed and the contract was signed in the last and the merchants were apprised of the goods to be provided.[69]

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[66] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p. 71.

[67] F.C.Danvers(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. I, Sampson Low, London, 1900, p.134.

[68] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p. 271.

[69] Ibid.,

Company's General Letter, 1675

The goods sent from Metchlipatam were as follows:

	Bullion sent
	£ 67,000
6,000 pieces of ordinary long cloth	
10,000 pieces of ordinary long cloth to be provided at Metchlipatam.	
9,000 brown pieces of brown unbleached long cloth	
2,000 pieces of ordinary long cloth	
8,000 pieces of fine long cloth, 2,500 from Metchlipatam	
5,000 blue long cloth	
20,000 pieces blue to be provided at Metchlipatam	
12,000 fine Salampores, 8,000 Salampores at Metchlipatam.	
9,000 pieces of parkalos; 4,000 pieces at Metchlipatam.	
6,000 pieces ordinary (muri blue cloth)	
5,000 fine muris, 1,000 superfine pieces of cloth(muri)	
1,500 pieces of fine broad ginghams, 21 to 24 yards long	
9,000 pieces ordinary broad ginghams, 21 to 24 yards	
3,000 pieces offine Beetalis, 25 yards long.	
3,000 pieces of fine Beetalis, 20 yards long.	
6,000 pieces of alacha, silk cloth red and perfect white.	
300 fine pieces of bethlas, 25 yards long	
1,500 fine Salu (red muslin) at Golconda	
1,000 pieces of dangri(sail cloth)	
1,000 pieces of fine neck cloth, striped with white 1½ yds long.	
1,000 pieces of neck cloth, 2 yards long.[70]	

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[70] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p. 259.

On 11th January, 1677, after many debates between the agent Streynsham Master and the local merchants; the merchants agreed to 'a settled contract for goods to be provided'. In the previous March, they had been unwilling to bind themselves to an arrangement lasting longer than one season.[71] The merchants agreed to pay the following goods:

		Prices in Pagodas
8,000	pieces of fine salampores of 32 covid long 2 1/8 broad at $1\frac{5}{8}$ pagodas per lb.	1,300
4,000	pieces of fine parkolas of 15 covids long 2 1/8 broad ¼ pagodas per piece	300
750	pieces of Izar Ginghamas 16 covids long 2 1/8 covids broad, woven 1 5/56 pagodas per piece	984
9,000	pieces of warangal veelings 25½ pagodas per piece	1,147
6,000	pieces of Alachah, 19½ pag. per piece	5,850
1,500	pieces of salus of Golconda, 25½ pago. per corge	1,912
	Total Pagodas	11,493

The half of the money was spent on the goods while the other half after the arrival of goods.[72] Thus, Metchlipatam enjoyed a reputation of being an important centre of textile

[71] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I., p. 123.

[72] Ibid., p. 272.

industry in 17th century.

Karedu in the Nellore district was the only suitable port for loading the goods, as the ships could anchor in the port. It was a sea port and the best town on the road hitherto.[73]

Kalavoy or Kaluyaya, a village in the Atmakur taluq in the Nellore district was also famous for cloth.[74]

Pulicat (Hindi Paliyaghat) was situated 24 miles north of Madras. The Dutch erected a factory in 1609 and was considered to be the earliest settlement in India. Here they had built a fort called Geldria or Guledras in 1619. The settlement of Pulicat proved of great advantage to the Dutch, for the best cotton goods were procurable from the adjacent districts while the fortress of Geldria enabled them to overawe their Naik. The English became partners with Hollanders at Pulicat but the union proved to be a temporary affair and terminted in 1626. In 1626, a grant was obtained at Armagaon, 35 miles to the northward of Pulicat and a factory and a small fort was erected there.[75] Jacques Caulier was the Dutch Governor and Director of the Coromandel coast from 1676 until his death at Pulicat on 5th November,1679,when Streynsham Master paid a visit there on 30th April,1679,he was kindly

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[73]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1624-29,p.266.

[74]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal,p. 52n.

[75]Henry Davidson Love, Vestiges of Old Madras, Vol. II, p. 13.;

received by the Governor and his subordinates and was given 'gracious reception'.[76] The Frenchman Thevenot during his visit in 1667 found the place most flourishing. Saltpetre procured from Bengal was refined at Pulicat. He remarked that Dutch had the best factory at Pulicat 'by reason of the cotton cloths of which they have great ware-houses full there'.[77] Alexander Hamilton found the people mostly employed in a 'knitting cotton stockings which they export for the use of all the European factories in India'.[78] Moreover, this place was also famous for the procurement of 'Chaya root' for dyeing red and also leaves of certain trees for dyeing green.[79]

Armagaon

It was originally and properly known as Armegom, Arumukhan and was twenty miles north of Pulicat, founded in February 1626. It was later on abandoned in favour of the settlement at Fort St. George in 1641. The English transferred their factory from Masulipatam to Armegaon in 1628.[80] It was a small port in Nellore

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[76] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol.II, p. 115n, and Vol. I, p.91.

[77] S.N.Sen (ed.), Indian Travels of Thevnot and Careri, National Archives of India, Delhi, 1949, p.105.

[78] Alexander Hamilton, A New Account of the East Indies: being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, edited by William Foster, London, 1930., Vol. I, p.369.

[79] W.H.Moreland (ed.), Relations of Golconda in the Early 17th Century: Schorer's Account, p.

[80] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, p.131n.

district notable for a light house which warned the vessels off the Armegaon Shoel, six miles off shore.[81] It was much better situated than Madras for purposes of trade. It manufactured a variety of piece goods such as chints and calicoes.[82] Richard Johnson found it as a place "where all the prime paintings (printed cloth) in this country be made; so that merchants, weavers and painters flock there daily more and more; that nothing but want of means will hinder our proceedings".[83] In another letter it was discovered that the merchants have provided plenty of paintings(Chentz) and other clothes but for want of money they can only given them good assurances and words.[84]

Madras

This alternative name of the place, officially called by its founders, Fort St. George, appears about the middle of 17th century. The city of Madras was founded in 1639 near Saint-Thome. The English territory of Madras was purchased by Francis Day from Sri Ranga Raja Chandragiri, was a mere strip of land north of St. Thome. The English made a settlement here known as the white town, with a fortress in the centre called

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[81] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p. 26n.

[82] Records of Fort St. George, Despatches from England,1670-77, Government Press, Madras, 1919, pp.167-77.

[83] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1624-29,p.129.

[84] Ibid.

as Fort St. George.[85] Another interesting account is given by Charles Lockayer who came to India in September 1702 in the ship Colchester and worked as an assistant accountant. According to hkm Fort St. George on the coast of Coromandel was a port of greatest significance to the East India Company for its strength, wealth and great returns made yearly there in calicoes and muslins.[86] Whenever, the European ships came to Madras, the sea gate was always packed with people, 'some laying wagers, others waiting for masters and the rest to satisfy this curiosities".[87] Goods were seldom taken to shore on the first day of the arrival of ships. The English company on the arrival of ships sent the refreshments for the crew and then country boats and cattarmarons to unload the goods from the ships.[88]

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[85] J.Talboys Wheeler, A History of the Early Settlements in India, 2nd edition, Vishal Publishers, Delhi, 1972 (Reprint).

[86] Charles Lockeyer, An Account of the Trade in India, London, 1711, pp.78 and 84.

[87] Ibid., p. 85.

[88] Catamarons or Cattarmarons were nothing more than three or four little planks joined together and fastened securly like a raft. There were some which were covered with a mat and could carry little sail made of the bark of trees with which they sailed very quickly. But when they wanted to row the fishermen or the owner, sat partly in the water rowing with his feet and also with an oar which had flat ends so that he got along very nicely. See H.Yule and A.C.Burnell, Hobson-Jobson's Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, edited by W.Crooke, p.173.

Alexander Hamilton also gave a detailed account of the city of Madras. He was there in 1689 and remarked that the town of Madras was divided into two parts respectively known as Black and White one where the Europeans dwell was called white town while as Black town mostly comprised of Hindus, Muslims, Indian Christians, Armenians and Portugueses. The Company according to him had a mint of its own at Madras where they carried bullion into rupees which was later on stamped with the 'Persian characters, declaring the Mogul's name, year of the region and some of his x epithets'. They also coined gold into pagodas of several denominations and value the imports mainly consisted of victuals like rice and wheat which came from Gaugam and Orissa, Surat and Bengal and firewood from the island of Diu.[89]

Richard Carnac Temple has furnished an interesting and detailed account of trade in the coast and Bay, meaning thereby the whole Eastern coasts of India and Bengal, with Madras as headquarters during the time of Streymshan Master, who was the agent of 'Coast and Bay' from 1675-80. The English chartered annually about half a dozen ships, carrying more than 2,000 tons for the 'outward and homeward' voyages, which took almost a year. In 1676, five ships whose total tonnage was 2,140 tons, came to Madras and greatly occupied Master's attention as the agent of the coast and Bay. The cargo consisted of four categories;

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[89] William Foster (ed.), A New Account of the East Indies; being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, Vol.I, p.88.

bullion, merchandize, stores and broadcloth - while for the return journies the cargo was mainly of cotton and silk piece goods and a very limited amount of general merchandize. The value of the outward cargo was £ 23,500 distributed thus:

Bullion	£ 196,000	or roughly	83%
Merchandize	£ 29,000	or roughly	12%
Stores	£ 2,000	or roughly	1%
Broadcloth	£ 8,000	or roughly	4% [90]

In 1676 and 1677, the return goods sent from the Bay consisted of the following cotton and silk goods :

Cloths or Calicoes	Pieces(1676)	Pieces(1677)
Long,white,unbleached,soft,blue	104,000	96,000
Blue(Muris) ordinary,fine,superfine	12,000	12,000
Spangled, fine	9,000	8,000
Chintz	92,000	95,000
Diaper patterned,ordinary fine	-	3,000
Veilings: ordinary,fine,transparent	15,000	20,000
Muslins,fine red(salu)	1,500	-
Sail cloth	10,000	20,000
Neckcloths: 18 to a piece	2,000	3,000
Handkerchiefs 15 to a piece	-	10,000
Veilings,fine unbleached(silk goods)	300	600
Cloths: red and white	6,000	6,000 [91]

The method of trading was through contracts to the native merchants who were required to provide the goods 'within fixed time'

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[90] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, 'Trade and Finance in Eastern India in Master's Time', Vol.I, p.133.

[91] Ibid., p. 134.

As in the case of Venka Brahman, a native merchant at Madapollan, who was entrusted with 6,000 pagodas or £ 2,700 for a supply of Chintzes, spangled cloths and veilings, at a discount of 12 per cent, representing a gain on the transaction of £ 321 to the Company. Thus, Madras assumed great importance, it being a seat of the English Agent and Council and headquarters of the coast and Bay.[92]

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[92]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p. 135.

CHAPTER V

TOWARDS TRIPOD TRADING CENTRES: EAST COAST

The earliest European settlement in the Gulf of Bengal were established in Orissa.[1] Ascending along with western shore of the Bay of Bengal, the coast of Orissa was the first to offer a landing place.[2] In the beginning of 16th century, Portuguese were the first to establish their commercial foothold on the coast of Madras but because of the native opposition they retired northwards and in 1514 founded a town in Pipli about four miles from the mouth of the Subarnerekha river. Pipli was then an

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[1] In Sanskrit Orissa was known as Odrastra, the land of the Odras. The name Orissa belonged to the ancient kingdom and the modern province lies between Bengal and Coromandel coast. Col. Yule and A.C.Burnell, Hobson-Jobson, A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, edited by William Crooke, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1968, p.645 (Reprint).

[2] Barbosa who visited Orissa in the 15th Century described as 'further on towards the interior there is another kingdom which is conterminious with that of Narsynga and on another side with Bengala, and on another with the great kingdom of Dely', L.Dames,ed. The Book of Durate Barbosa, Hakluyt Society, London, 1918-21, Vol.II, p. 306.

important habbour on the Orissa coast and entrepot of Portuguese trade when their fleets commanded the whole sea broad from Chinttagong to Orissa. It was also a well-known slave market where Portuguese pirates sold their prisoners.[3] Gabriel Boughton (an English Surgeon) obtained permission from Shah Shuja to establish a factory at Pipli in 1634, but thereis no evidence that the privilege was made use of.[4] In 1670, when John Marshall visited the place (Pipli), the Dutch had already a factory there.[5] In 1676, Streynsham Master wrote of this factory that the Dutch had pulled it down and built a new one at Balasore.[6] Captain Alexander Hamilton remarked that there was a factory at one time in Pipli and the country produced the same commodities that Balasore does, at present, it is reduced to beggery by the factory's removal to Hugly and Calcutta, the river Subaranekha had by that time silted up'.[7]

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[3] J.J.A.Campos, History of the Portuguese in Bengal, Calcutta, 1919, p.97-

[4] William Wilson Hunter, A History of British India, Indian Reprints Publishing Co., Delhi, 1972, Vol. II, p. 86.
The beginning of English trade with Orissa is usually ascribed to a farman granted to the English, received at Surat in 1634 and confining them to Pipli, near an old mouth of the Subarnarekha river, on the Orissa coast, but extensive inquiry has rendered it doubtful whether such a firman was ever issued and any factory was established at Pipli, R. Burlow and Henry Yule, (eds.), The Diary of Sir William Hedges During His Agency in Bengal, 1877-89, Hakluyt Society, 1877 London, Vol. III, pp. 175-181.

[5] Shaffat Ahmad Khan, John Marshall In India, Oxford University Press, London, 1927, p.16.

[6] Richard Carnac Temple (ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, John Murrary, London, 1911, p.290.

[7] William Foster (ed.), A New Account of the East Indies: being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, London, 1930, Vol. II, p.3.

Balasore

Before the advent of the English the Portuguese and Dutch had not only settled at Pipli but Balasore as well. According to John Marshall, Balasore was previously called Bahagur. The English had a factory there a little away from the river side and during rainy season, from May to October, it became very dirty. Afterwards it became very pleasant. It was a 'very great stragling toune but scaree a house in it but dirst thatcht one's.[8] Balasore, a district in Orissa was bordered on the north by Midnapur district and tributary state of Morbhang, on the east by the Bay of Bengal and on the south by the Cuttack distSict. Balasore derived its name from Bal-Ishwara meaning the young lord or the lord of Strength.[9]

The English agent at Masulipatam, John Norris sent a party of six Englishmen under the leadership of Ralph Cartwright to explore the possibility of trade in Orissa. The party was kindly received by the Governor of Orissa, Aga Muhammad Zaman[10], the

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[8]Shaffat Ahmad Khan(ed.), John Marshall in India, being his Notes and Observations, p.8.

[9]William Wilson Hunter,(ed.), Imperial Gazetteer of India(Indian Empire), Vol. II, Clarendon Press, London, 1912, p.390.

[10]Muhammad Zaman Tihrani was born in Tehran(Persia) was a distinguished soldier and an efficient administrator whose career is given by C.R.Wilson, The Early Annals of the English in Bengal,Vol.I ,Bimla Publishing House,Delhi,1983,p. ,8n, (Reprint).

One of the six members of the team being William Bruton, Quarter Master of ship Hopewell, who has left an interesting account in his book William Bruton's A Voyage to Bengala,1638, p.275.

successor of Baquir Khan and obtained from him a (Parwanah), permission granting the English the liberty to 'traffic and export, free of customs at any port of Orissa and to purchase ground, erect factories and build or repair ships. The next year (1634) they were said to have obtained firman from Shah Jahan, 'giving them liberty to trade in the whole country of Bengala but retraining their shipping into the port of Pippli at the mouth of the Subarnarekha river'.[11]

The merchandize brought by the English in the Swan in 1636 consisted mainly of broad cloth and lead which remained unsold for a year in Balasore. The cloth had to be "dispeeded to Pattana, a month's journey into the country as they had no market on the sea coast'.[12]

The luscious fruits and cheap arrack for which Orissa was well known remained the big temptation with the English sailors and during the rainy season the deadly malaria of the swams crept found their factory at Hariharpur in the mid-delta as round a

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[11] C.R.Wilson, Early Annals of the English in Bengal, Vol. I., Bimla Publishing House, Indian Reprint, 1983, pp.11-12. A reference regarding the permission of trade has also been given in the English Factories. William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India.1614-16, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1911, pp. 12, 204.

[12] The Factor writing from Masulipatam to the Company, October 22, 1634, William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1634-36, p.36.

For further details of Balasore trade, see the author's article, "The Balasore Trade in the 17th Century", published by the Panjab University Research Bulletin(Arts),Vol.IX, April-October, 1978,pp.135-140.

beleaguered city. Before the end of the year, five of the six English factors in Orissa died due to the terrible fever as the English could not aclamatize with the Orissa weather. With their (English) goods unsold and factors and seamen dying around them, the survivors somehow managed to stay there during the rainy season of 1633.[13] The Portuguese menace was still great as they supplied to the other countries the cloth of Hariharpur.[14] A Dutch fleet from the Madras coast and the Eastern archipelago also caused considerable inconvenience as they blocked the road steads. Cartwright had to give up the idea of planting agencies at Pipli and Puri, and soon what remained with the English was the settlement of Balasore only. The company at home looked upon the Orissa settlements as new and unprofitable burden thrust upon it.[15] In 1641, the ship Dyamond was ordered there to pay off

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[13] William Wilson Hunter, A History of British India, Indian Reprints Publishing Co., Delhi, 1972, Vol. II, p. 93.

[14] Hariharpur or Arispore was mentioned in 1633 when Bruton with 6 members of the team landed there. It was the earliest English factory in the Bay of Bengal. The place was also known of the 'Sannoes' type of cloth in 17th century, which was in great demand in England, Richard Carnac Temple,(ed.), Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, p.323.

[15] R.Burlow and Henry Yule,(eds.), The Diary of Sir William Hedges During His Agency in Bengal, Hakluyt Society, Vol. III,1887-89, London, p.181.

their debts and bring away the factors. But in 1642, Francis Day, the founder of Madras fought hard for the retention of Balasore and protested that 'it is not to be totally left'.[16] The importance of Balasore increased after the humiliating defeat of the Portuguese by the Mughals in 1636.[17] So as a result the trade declined at Pipli and other neighbouring places. But the Portuguese influence was still great in Orissa as they supplied to the other countries the cloth of Hariharpur known as Herba cotton or Tassar, a speciality of Balasore for which it was well known. It was also

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[16] William Wilson Hunter, A History of British India, Vol. II,p.94.

[17] Shah Jahan on his accession to the throne had directed Qasim Khan, the Governor of Bengal to capture Portuguese settlement at Hugli which he did in September 1632. Various theories have been advanced by the different historians. The Muhammaden historians think that it was evoked by the piratical and oppressive measures including the forcible conversion of Hindus and Muslims to Christianity,Elliot & Dowson, History of India as told by her Own Historians(Abdul Hamid Lauhori, Padshahnama) Vol.VII, Kitab Mahal, Allahabad,1930,pp.31,42. ; According to Manucci, it was Mumtaz Mahal who prompted by proseylytizing spirit instigated this measure, William Irvine(tr.), Niccolao Manucci's Storia da Magor, John Murrary, London, 1907,Vol.I., p.182. But the real reason was probably Shah Jahan wanted to punish Portuguese for they did not help him when he went to Bengal as a rebel and a fugitive and this thing was lurking in his mind as a thorn, Bararasi Prasad Saxena, History of Shah Jahan of Dihli, Central Book Depot, Allahabad,1973,p.106.

famous for the production of "Ginhams, Herba taffatyes, Herba Lungees (Lungi, loin cloth) and other sorts of Herba goods might be made near and brought hither, and nowhere so good Herba goods procurable. The waters of Casharry giving the most lasting dye to them, and within 2 days journey of this place".[18]

Balasore was an important centre for the production and trade in cloth. The varieties of textiles found there including costly samanoes, dimities, mulmuls, silken and cotton rumals and silken bed sheets while cotton yarn was also exported from Balasore.[19]

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[18] Walter Clavell, "Accompt of the Trade at Ballaspre", 15-12-1676, Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol.II, pp.84-85.

The herba cloth was made from 'hearbe' which they spun like yarn. This yellowish cloth was termed as the 'hearba of Bengal'. This herba thread was most cunningly used at stich their coverlits, pavalions, pillows, carpets and mantle's and make them with flowers and branches and personages, that it is wonderful to see and so finely done with cunning worksmanship, that it cannot be mended throughout Europe'. Moreover, they made cloth of Herba sometimes mixed and woven with silk. It was however, 'much fayerer' when mixed with silk, Linschoten says that these 'webs' were known as 'Sarrifin' and were much used and worn in India for men's trousers. This cloth was washed like linen and looked new afterwards. Linschoten, The Voyage of John Huyghen Van Linchoten to the East Indies, 2 Vols. Hak, London, 1885.

Grass cloths are spoken of by foreign travellers as an item of export from Orissa and Bengal. They were made of rhea or some 'pindered species', H.Yule, & A.C.Burnell, Hobson-Jobson's Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Pharses, edited by William Crooke, p.393.

[19] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India 1634-36, p.42. Sanah was a kind of fine cloth, C.R.Wilson, The Early Annals of the English in Bengal, Vol. I, p.

There is reason to think that the cloth known as Sanah in 17th century, still exists as Salu, a cheap fine cloth, generally red in common use, Richard Carnac Temple, Thomas Bowrey's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, Hakluyt Society, London, 1905, p.231n.

Thomas Bowery has described the available cotton goods at Balasore. "From Hugly and Ballasore, Sanas, Ginghams, Orammals, cotton yarne, which goods are embodied in the before mentioned factories, and according to order from the honourable East India Company, are sent on board the English ships that yearly do arrive and anchor in Ballasore roade, and thence do sett saile in the month December, bound up to Metchlipatam and Fort St. George where their full ladeing is prepared and in a few days shipped on board and about the latter end of January doe saile intendinge for England".[20]

Peter Murdy has furnished a list of the following cotton goods of Balasore available at Patna in the thirties of the 17th century.

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[20] Richard Carnac Temple, Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, pp.231-32.
Gingham, an Indian cotton cloth. It is an old English name, probably of Indo-European origins for a stuff made of cotton yarn dyed before being woven, striped. Ginghams of lively colours were a favourable variety in the 18th century. H.Yule, and A.C.Burnell,(eds.), Hobson-Jobson, A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases,edited by William Crooke,p. 375. Among the goods to be provided for 1679,were coloured ginghams, 10,000 pieces and as many pieces of nillees. Rumals, "The musters of Rhumalls we have received and finde to be of some sort we have this year contracted for here. Letter from Hugli to Balasore, 3rd September,1680,F.R.Hugli, No.5, Ibid.

1. Khasas
2. Ambarties*
3. Hamam, a thick stout cloth used for wrappers.[21]

The English goods brought into Balasore were mainly consisted of scarlet blades, broad cloths of divers sort, vermillion, brimstone, lead, copper, rial of eight and coral.[22] In 1642, the English factors of Balasore sold or bartered their "glasses, knives, lead, broadcloth for sugar,'gurras',Sannoes, cassaes, iron and ginghams, all except last one was sent to Perisa".[23]

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*Ambertee or ambartree was from Hindi word amriti, imarti,amirti, imriti, was a name of a cloth in northern India and was also used for derivations from Sanskrit in the sense of anything sweet. This cloth was stouter than the varieties like dariabadi khairabadi and Samana. Ambarti cloth was a stout close calico of narrow width, produced cheaply and in large quantities at Patna, which in 1619, seemed to be a far off place for the merchants of the East India Company stationed at Surat. In order to procure this cloth, they sent Robert Hughes, a factor of four years experience to see what could be done. He started off on 5th June, 1620 with a credit of Rs.4,000 and arrived at Patna on 3rd July, with the convoy of goods, Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey, (eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,1608-67, Hakluyt Society, London, 1907, Vol. II,p.141n, 361.

[21] Ibid., pp.154-55.

[22] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p. 232.

[23] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1642-45, pp.65,77,101.

About 1650, the goods which came from Hugli to Balasore consisted of raw silk, saltpetre, sugar, dry ginger, bees wax, long pepper, rice, oil and wheat, all at about half the price of other places.[24]

Extract of a Letter from William Longhorn

William Longhorn and the Council at Fort St. George informed Walter Clavell, the cheif factor, on 9th October,1676 that the goods which mainly came to Balasore from inland factories were "Tincall and turmerick from Patna, Taffaties,raw silk,Florete yarn from Kasimbazar and mulmuls from Hughly also sticklac, turmeric, neckles, fine ginghams from Hugli to Balasore". The Council further resolved to despatch 'Loyall Eagle' and Johanne' by 20th October while the other two ships Falcon and Surat Merchant were to be despatched on the 30th October and were further instructed to halt at Masulipatam for filling goods.[25] Two ships Advice and Encounter came from Masulipatam to Balasore with a rich cargo of goods purchased at the latter place sailed from there for Balasore on November 25, 1637. In the same year (1637) an English vessel Globe sailed from Balasore carrying 50 suckles of cloves valuing 6 golden pagodas f per maund.[26]

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[24]James Bridgman, abroad the Lioness, written to the Company, on December 15, 1650, William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1646-50, p.

[25]Factory Records, Fort St. George, Vol. XVIII, p. 19.

[26]William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1637-41, p.95.

We get an idea of the prevelent rates at which the English factors entered into engagements with the local manufacturers from an account given in Streynsham Master's Diary in the year 1679. The rates were as follows:

	Prices per piece
Coarse cotton	Rs. 4/- per piece.
Mixed cotton	Rs. 3/- per piece.
Blue cotton	Rs. 4½ per piece.
Towellings	Rs. 5/-per piece.
Thick muslins	Rs. 7½ per piece.
Soft Muslins	Rs. 8/-per piece.[27]

The goods which the brokers and contractors in agreement with the Balasore factory prior to shipping season were as follows:

Goods

500 corge of sannoes of 30 covids long and 2 covids broad viz., 200 corge'herapore'

150 corge Sura[28]

150 corge of Mohanpore[29]

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[27]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p. 137.

[28]Probably Samu, Bengal cotton goods and possibly the same as Salu, a cotton cloth usually of Turkey red, Richard Carnac Temple,(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.231.

[29]Sannoes made at Hariharpur, Soro and Mohanpur, Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I.,p.306n.

Goods	Rupees
500 corge Ginghams[30]	30,000
400 corge nelaes[31]	36,000
Total	106,000[32]
50 corge Hamams[33]	5,000
100 corge Khasas (200 pieces)[34]	15,000
150 corge mulmul(which is 100 corge)[35]	24,000
Total	150,000[36]

[30]Indian ginghams were cotton stuffs mixed with other material., Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p. 306n.

[31]Nillaes, a kind of blue cloth(Hindi blue - nils), Ibid.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Hamam, it was an Arabic term apparently so named from its having been originally used at the bath, is a cloth of thick stout texture and generally worn as a wrapper in the cold season, J.A.Taylor, Descriptive and Historical Account of the Cotton Manufacture of Dacca in Bengal, London, 1851, p. 63.

[34]It was again used as an Arabic word means special and Taylor calls it as Khasu, fine and elegant. The term is used for Muslins of fine close texture, Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p.307n.

[35]Mulmull (Hindi Malmal) was a generic term for muslins of various degree of ovality. The term'Mull Muslin' indicating a fine soft material was in common use in England, Ibid.,p.307n.

[36]Ibid, p.306.

According to a supplementary letter written on 26th December and despatched by ship Madras Merchant to Bengal, the following goods of Balasore found a mention in it:

Cotton yarn(at the best season)	Rs.14 a maund.
Stick lac (when cleaned)	Rs.7½ a maund.
Sugar	Rs.9 to 9½ a bale

While Saltpetre mainly came from Patna in the bulk, varying from 2 to 3,000 maund. It was brought by the river to the factory in the oxen.[37]

The other important commodity which was available at Balasore was saltpetre. It was used as an ingredient for gun powder. There was a keen competition among the various European merchant companies for its monopoly in India. The English factors (agent) Greenhill and William Gurney informed the company from St. George on January 14, 1652, that large quantities of Saltpetre could be obtained at Balasore and Hugli, however, the process of refining in the copper pans proved expensive as 200 out of 600 such pans were damaged. They(factors) further requested them to send pots from 'Assada'(Afrika) in which sugar was boiled. They (factors) were, therefore, obliged to send them in its raw form. The factors further complained that the price of saltpetre after refining was almost double than that of Patna so the proportion was highly unprofitable. The Dutch were having very profitable

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[37]William Foster (ed.), The English Factories in India,1655-60,p. 298.

trade of saltpetre at Balasore. They (Dutch) annually despatched about 2,000 tons of saltpetre(refined) from Pipli for Europe. The Dutch, according to the letter were very well settled there and having good accommodation at Balasore.[38] The English despatched the ship Loyalty to England with a rich load of saltpetre on February 21,1651.[39]

Thomas Bowery was of the opinion that "only commodities of this kingdome that are yearly sent to England and Holland, with a considerable investment of each nation is codde Musk which is found here and is very good. It is in general taken from a small deere of about 2 foot high, of which this country doth mightilie abound".[40] The saltpetre was mostly sent to Hugli in the boats known as 'Patellas' which were flat bottomed boats but exceptionally powerful to carry any load of saltpetre."Many Petallas come down yearly, and goe up laden with salt and bees wax, the kings only commodities".[41]

Balasore had trade relations with Maldive island.It supplied to them rice, grain, and other accessories needed by them and in return would get 'cowries' or conch shells(a currency) and coir used for ships.[42]

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[38] William Foster (ed.), The English Factories in India,1651-54, p.95.

[39] Ibid.,pp.100, 47, 92.

[40] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p. 232.

[41] Ibid.,pp.225,229.

[42] William Foster,(ed.), A New Account of the East Indies: being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton,Vol.I. p.394.

Balasore had trade relations with Persia as well. From early English records, it is clear that the English East India Company would sometimes hire Indian ships to trade with Persia. Paul Waldergrave at Balasore informed the President and Council at Surat on August 17, 1653, that the goods sent from Balasore under the charge of Cherry had been sold in Persia at a good profit but did not know as to how the money after the sale of goods would come from Persia. The letter further ran that Mr. Boughton had a personal share in the sale of Indian goods at Persia, who later on died in debt to shroff Churamal of Patna. He(Boughton) owed 5 to 6,000 rupees to Chauramal who later on appealed the company to get him the money advanced to Boughton.[43]

In 1644, the Surat factors sent to the Balasore factors one chest of rials with orders to provide for Persia 150 bales of sugar, 10 or 12 bales of gurras and the coarse quantity of sannas.[44] The Dutch had also trade relations with Persia. In April 1653, two Dutch ships from Balasore left Surat for Basra and Gombroon.[45]

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[43]William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1651-54, p. 193.

[44]Ibid., 1642-45, pp. 65-66, 207.

[45]Ibid., 1651-54, p. 183.

Streynsham Master, an Agent of the East India Company was sent from England and entrusted with the task of enquiring and reforming the affairs of the English Company on the 'coast and Bay'. He visited Balasore in 1676 and again in 1679 with a view to improving the working of Balasore factory. The chief points which Master was ordered to inquire into the factory of Balasore and others were the methods of keeping accounts, the disposal of European goods, the mode of contracting for Indian piece goods, raw silk, etc., the character and ability of the company's servants, the company's privileges and the farmans by which they were obtained. He was also empowered to look into the personal grievances and disputes of the company's servants on the factories of 'Coast and Bay'.[46] He was further enjoined to send home a detailed list of all persons in the Company's pay with remarks on their 'abilities and capacities'. He was also armed with the authority to suspend the company's servants, even the members of Council, should he be satisfied that they had done irregularties.[47] On August 20, 1679, he paid a visit to Balasore where he was 'heartily received by the Governor Malik Qasim and the chief of the Danish factory.[48] The chief business conducted at Balasore was the inspection of accounts. In February 1679, Master wrote to the chief and Council in 'the Bay',"complaining of the way in which the 'books of Accounts' at Hugli, Balasor, and Dacca were kept, soe that we are far to seek in the perfecting your account currant in our Generall Books as ever we were".[49]

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[46] R.C.Temple(ed.), Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol.I,p.3.
[47] Ibid., p.3.
[48] Ibid., pp.99-100.
[49] Ibid.

He (Master) found the accounts of Balasore factory 'behind hand, in great disorder and confusion'. He ordered the accountant to adjust them with the broker and merchants immediately', so that everything might be settled in 'due order' before the agent's departure.[50] Next, the problem of carrying trade also engaged the attention of Master who summoned the prominent merchants like (Chimcham) Khemchand, Suraj Shaw, Raja Ram, Hira Shaw and Kalayan Rai to settle amicably the problem of investment and supply of goods. Accordingly, they agreed to supply the 12,000 single pieces of silk rumals at the rate of 3½ rupees per piece but refused to take English broad cloth and lead in exchange. The other commodities to be brought were 100 tons of stick lac and turmeric which however, was cheaper in Patna.[51]

The merchants agreed to provide the above mentioned goods to the company by 24th December, 1675 which was the 'usual time for supplying goods'.[52]

At a consultation held on 16th December at Balasore where Streynsham Master, Walter Clavell, John Marshall and Edmond Bugden were present, it was resolved that since there was glut of English goods like broad cloth and lead at Balasore factory,

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[50]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol, I, p. 100.

[51]Ibid., p. 308.

[52]Ibid., pp.306-307.

it was therefore, further resolved by the Council that a portion of English goods may be sent to every English factory on the Bay and Coast' and the factors should make earnest endeavours to dispose of the goods entrusted to their care, 'being much for the nation's interest'.[53]

Streynsham Master has also left a detailed account of the manner of carrying trade at Balasore in 1676. Measures for the expansion of trade were undertaken vigorously at the time of Master's visit for the purpose of inquiring into the prevailing state of affairs at the Balasore factory. It consisted of giving advances to weavers early in the season in order to facilitate the provision of goods before the arrival of ships from England and sending competent persons to outlying weaving areas for report on the nature of trade there. It was in the light of such a report that the question of the improvement of trade could be taken up.[54]

Master has also given an account of how the factory at Hugli was chosen as the seat of the chief and Council in the Bay in preference to that of Balasore for loading and unloading of all Europe bound goods. It was deemed advisable that the chief along with the Council should go every year to Balasore in order to expedite the despatch of ships to England and make inspection

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[53] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II,p.78.

[54] Ibid., Vol. I., p. 54.

into the affairs of Balasore factory. Thus, Balasore became what Master called a district factory and subordinate to that of Hugli.

The English started paying advances to the merchants and brokers for the supply of local products after taking proper steps for the security of goods. The latter felt impelled to supply the products within the fixed time.[55]

Balasore as a Ship Building Centre

Balasore was an important ship building and ship repairing centre due to suitable dockyards. Not only that it was also a suitable halting place for the ships. Hopewell left Balasore on December 1, 1643 with a rich cargo of goods for the general voyage 'Invoiced' at 15,879 ruppes - as annas along with the passangers.[56] Again on November 1643, Advice left Balasore and Masulipatam ten days later with a cargo for the joint stock amounting to 5,333 ruppes and also paid 486 ruppes as a freight on goods.[57] Another ship Endeavour sailed from Balasore on November 25 and after calling at Hariharpur reached Masulipatam on December 8 and touched Fort St. George on 27th December. She was laden with a rich cargo while ruppes 4857 were kept for the general voyage and it paid Rs.745 as freight charges on goods.[58]

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[55] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol.I, pp.498-501.

[56] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1642-45,p.65.

[57] Messrs Cogan, Greenhill at Fort St. George to the President and Council at Bantam, January 4,1643, Ibid., . .

[58] Ibid., p. 77.

Balasore being an important ship building centre is evident from the fact that in 1634, the Governor of Balasore sold a small half finished ship of 100 tons to the East India Company and named it as Thomas, loaded with commodities for despatch to the Bay.[59] Four years later, the Masulipatam factors sent Thomas Godfrey, Master of the Coaster to proceed to Balasore for refitting the Thomas.[60]

A factor of the company, Captain Durson reached Balasore in his ship Loyality on August 1651 and showed the willingness to undertake a journey to England. After loading a good stock of Saltpetre,[61] his ship struck again in January 10,1652 while crossing the bar of Balasore and had become total wreck. He (Durson) thereupon entered into an aggeement with the Governor of Balasore and built a vessel of 200 tons in which he expressed the intentions of visiting from port to port carrying English goods meant for sale until his employees sent hkm a ship to take him back alongwith his goods.[62] Apart from being a ship building centre, Balasore was also known for the construction of boats,

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[59] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India 1634-36, p.43.

[60] Ibid., 1637-41, p. 50.

[61] Ibid., 1651-54, pp.47,100.

[62] Ibid., p. 92.

which were used for coastal trade. Blacke, a factor of the company had built three boats to carry goods between Balasore and Hugli. The boats which Blacke made last year were destroyed by the storm and the rest were used by the Nawab.[63]

Thus, the economic importance of Balasore was for its being a source of supply of cotton manufacturers for export purposes. Secondly, it was a market for the sale of goods imported from Europe. It also acted as a spring board for the supply of goods to Bengal and Patna. Thirdly, it was an important ship building and repairing centre due to the availability of accessories like timber, iron, etc., which could be procured without much difficulty.

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[63] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1651-54,p.40.

Bengal

Marcopolo who visited India in 1296 wrote that "Bengala* is a province towards the south which upto the year 1290 had not been conquered" and "where cotton grows in abundance and the trade flourishes." The inhabitants lived on the flesh, milk, and rice which was found in excess there.[64]

Barbosa who visited India in 1516 found the province of Bengal as most prosperous and full of foreigners like Arabs, Persians, Abyssians, Portuguese and Gujratis. They were all rich merchants engaged in the lucrative trade and owned large ships built in the Chinese manner and were called junks. These vessels were very large and carried a considerable cargo. In these vessels they would navigate the numerous ports of Coromandel, Malabar, Pegu, Sumatra, Tannesserim, Ceylon and Malacca and traded in all

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*Bungaleh originally called Bung, it derived the additional al from that being the name given to the mounds of earth which the ancient Rajahs caused to be raised in the low lands at the foot of hills". Bengal was the region of the Ganges Delta, and the districts immediately above it. Till the commencement of 13th century, the Muslim writers called by the name of Lakhnaoti, the chief city of Bengal but it had also not lost its old historic name Bang from Vanga, Henry Yule and A.C.Burnell, Hobson-Jobson's Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, edited by William Crooke, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1968, p.85.

64 E.P.Duttan, The Travels of Marcopolo, Orian Press, New York, p. 204.

kinds of goods. They led a luxurious life which was also not uncommon with the natives.[65]

In the beginning of 17th century, a French man, Pyrad of Laval, who visited Bengal bore an eloquent testimony to its trade and products. According to him kingdom of Bengal was great in extent. The country was wonderfully fertile. He further found that there was an abundance of rice that besides supplying the whole country, it exported to all parts of India like Malabar, Goa as well as to Sumatra, Moluccas and the islands of Sunda. There came a number of vessels from all parts of India. One of the greatest trade of Bengal were rice, various fruits, long pepper, ginger and cotton, the last being the most important item of export. The rice was a great especiality of Bengal and according to the traveller, "when the Bengal ships are behind their time or are lost, rice is fabulously dear and there is a cry of famine in Sumatra, Moluccas and Sunda islands".[66] According to Alexander Hamilton who traded in the East as 'Supercargo Commander' and owner in turn of various ships from 1688-1723,

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[65] Mansel Longworth Dames, A Book of Durate Barbosa, transated, Hakluyt Society, London, 1918-21, Vol. II, p. 145.

The French traveller Bernier who visited Bengal in 1666 talked very high of Bengal, its products and fertility. He remarked that "Kingdom of Bengal has a hundred gates open for entrance but not one for departure". Archibald Constable, English translator, Francois Bernier's Travels in Mughal India, 2nd ed., S.Chand & Co., Delhi, 1971, p.439 (Reprint).

[66] Albert Grey, English translator, The Voyage of Francois Pyrad of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, Moluccas and Brazil, Hakluyt Society, London, 1888, Vol. I., p. 38.

visited every port from Red Sea to China. He remarked that "their manufactories are of cotton in Sannis(Sanoes), Cassas (Khasas), demeties(dimities),mulmulms, silks and cotton rumals, Gurrahs and lungies".[67] Before the advent of the English or Dutch, Portuguese were carrying a lucrative business in Bengal. They were the sole monopolists of Bengal trade. A rough idea of the volume of Portuguese trade in Bengal can be formed from the very fact that they paid over 100,000 rupees as custom duties for one year at the rate of 2½ per cent on the value of goods exported and imported.[68] They maintained this monopoly through the various important trading centres as Hugli,Satgaon, Chittagong and the partial control over lesser ports like Hijli.[69] Manrique gave a detailed list of the goods which the Portuguese sold in Bengal at a good margin of profit.The articles imported by them from Southern India were a large number of worked silks, clives, nutmegs and mace from Moluccas and Banda and precious camphor from the isles of Borneo. From the Maldive islands,they imported sea-shells(cowries) which were current in Bengal as coins,

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[67] William Foster(ed.), A New Account of the East Indies: being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton,London, 1930, Vol.II,p.393.

[68] Sushil Chaudhuri,"Trade of Bengal in XVII Century", Bengal Past and Present, Lxxxvi, January to June, 1967.

[69] Sushil Chaudhuri, Trade and Commercial Organisation in Bengal, Firma K.L.Mukhopadhya, Calcutta, 1975,pp.7,9-10,12,14,23.

pepper from Malabar and cinnamon from Ceylon. They also brought from China great quantities of porcelain, pearls and jewels.[70]

But the Portuguese came in a severe conflict and gave a serious cause of offence by engaging in piratical and prosey-tzing activities. They leagued themselves with the pirates of Chittagong and scourged the neighbouring seas, entered the numerous branches of the Ganges, plundered the islands of lower Bengal and making their captives as slaves. Their treatment of such slaves was simply shocking as they (slaves) were subjected to barbaric treatment by the Portuguese.[71]

Moreover, the rapid growth of the Portuguese trade gave a severe blow to the prosperity of Satgan and Sonagaon and considerably undermined the trade of neighbouring towns. Further, they forced the catholic religion on all who became subject to their rule.[72] Infact, with the exception of a brief period of Akbar's reign, we do not find Portuguese having amicable relat-ions with the Mughals. Shahjahan's hostility towards them was based on a number of causes. They gave serious cause of offence

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[70] H.Hostein, Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique, Hakluyt Society, Oxford, Vol. II, 1927, pp.27-29.

[71] Archibald Constable, English translator, Francois Bernier's Travels in the Mughal Empire, pp.175-177.

[72] F.C.Danvers, The Portuguese in India, London, 1894, Vol. II, p.246.

by refusing to help him when he went to Bengal as a rebel. Manoel Tavers, a resident of Hugli first sided with Shah Jahan but deserted him at a critical moment, captured some of the richly laden boats and took some of his women servants including two slave girls of Mumtaz Mahal.[73] The Muslim and Porguguese have, however accounted the invasion of Mughals on Portuguese(1632) in their own manner. As already mentioned the Emperor was highly displeased with them maonly due to their piratical,proseylytizing and arrogant behaviour. He soon ordered Qasim Khan, the Governor of Bengal to make warlike operations against them and expell them from Bengal. The unmethodical warfare between Portuguese and the Mughals contimued for more than a month after which heavy artillery, consisting of 120 pieces of cannons reached Hugli. The Mughals opened the bombardment from all sides and thus Hugli was cleared of pirates. The imperialists also imprisoned about 4,000 families in order to frighten the native powers.[74] According to the testimony of Abdul Hamid Lauhori,the Portuguese were ultimately expelled from Bengal in 1632.[75]

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[73] Banarsi Prasad Saksena, History of Shahjahan of Dihli,Central Book Depot, Allahabad,1973, p. 106.

[74] H.M.Elliot and John Dowson, The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians, Vol.V II,Trubner & Com London, 1877,pp.30-34.; William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21, p.264.Ibid., 1630-33, p. 30, Introduction.

[75] Banarsi Prasad Saksena, History of Shahjahan of Dihli,pp.112-113.

Soon after the decline of the Portuguese power in Bengal, Dutch and English started their trade activities there. Even during the supremacy of the Portuguese power, the English were making great efforts to open and establish trade in Bengal for the year 1616 is of special significance for the English East India Company for during that year was the idea of direct trade with Bengal first definitely mooted. Joseph, Salbank, writing from Agra, suggested that some of the Company's servants should 'discover all parts of this country' including 'Bengala for the vent of our commodities'.[76] The same year Thomas Roe urged upon the Surat factors that an attempt should be made to open an overland trade with Bengal. But Thomas Kerridge,President of Surat Factory discounted the idea on the ground of being a Bengal being a 'whott country', its inhabitants mostly 'very poore Gentiles', and its sea coast controlled by the Dutch and the Portuguese, so that, he felt, 'the transportation by land thither', would be 'more hazardous than the benefit by the sale of a small quantity can answer.[77] Roe, however, did not agree

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[76] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. IV, Sampson Low Marston Co., London, 1896-1902, pp.66,250,315.

[77] Ibid., pp.327,342,343.

with Kerridge and insisted on opening an English factory in Bengal. "That Bengalla should be poore I see no reason", retorted Sir Thomas Roe, it feeds this countrie with wheate and rice, it sends sugar to all India, it hath the finest cloth and pintagoes, Musck, Civitt and Amber (besides) almost all raretyes from thence by trade from Pegu".[78] Those were the two popular views shared by the factors of the English East India Company till the end of the 17th century. Bengal was described as 'a hell stuffed with cheap provisions, "but really it should have been styled a paradise of India for its planty and prosperity". Thomas Roe's ideas on the future relations with the Portuguese were also very clear. "It is to be understood we must fire them out and mayntayne our trade at the pikes end".[79]

The Surat factors remained not very enthusiastic about Bengal trade and maintained that, "We deny not(Bengal) makes fine cloths, etc., which showeth the fertility of the country and the quality of the inhabitants, who, being tillers of the earth and trades men, by their sales in India reap the

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[78] William Foster,(ed.), The Embassay of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, Vol. II, Hakluyt Society,London, 1899, p.218.

[79] Ibid.,pp.219,193,434.

fruit of their labour and sustain life, and some no doubt get wealthy by merchandizing. Yet it followweth not that cloth will therefore, sell, which in those countries is spent in quantities by princes and gentry only. Of the first there is none, and of the letter very few. We acknowledge transportation by water thither is cheap; yet we think it were better to rot in Agmere... than after expense 'of time and moneys to return it thither to no other purpose'.[80]

It rather seemed paradoxical that T.Roe who was determined and over enthusiastic in opening an English factory in Bengal himself was found reluctant to open a factory there and thus, shared the opinion of the other factors like Thomas Kerridge.According to Tapan Ray Chaudhuri, "It is interesting to note that by the end of the year, ambassador himself was won over to the side of Surat factors". Writing to the Directors of the Company at home,he(Thomos Roe) opposed the idea of founding a factory in Bengal. Whereas you write for a new factories, except the silk of Bengala require it, "the letter ran, I am of opinion your residences are sufficient". The growing pessimism regarding the prospects of trade with Bengal is reflected clearly in Thomos Roe's letter to the Company in February 1617. "Bengal hath no ports", wrote he, "but such as the Portugalls possesse, for small shipping. It will vent nothing of your. The people are unwilling in respect of warr (as they suppose) like to ensure in their seas, and the prince

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[80] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. V, p.173.

hath crossed, it, thinking wee desired to remove thither wholly, and that, if wee stay in India, hee takes to been an affront".[81]

Despite the discouraging circumstances for the English there was a dominant factor which must have helped them considerably in overcoming their lost spirits and must have roused the new hopes for them as the Portuguese power every where at this time had started declining. Therefore, a growing sense of the importance of the trade with Bengal, the marked contrast with the previous indifference is evident in some letters of this time. "If any innovation or hopes of trade to Bengala shall occure", wrote William Methwold from Masulipatam to Roe,"It cannot be put he somewhat helpful to our proceedings".[82]

Hence, the English Ambassador tried hard to obtain a 'firman' for the rich trade of Bengal but the Mughal emperor could not be pursuaded to grant one because he was rightly apprehensive that Indian seas and trade would be interruped more by their querrels with the Portuguese.[83]

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[81] For Thomas Roe's efforts to procure a firman for trade in Bengal, see, William Foster(ed.), The Embassay of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, p.349.; Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol.IV to VI. Regarding the opening of Bengal Trade by the English also see, Tapan Ray Chaudhuri's Bengal Under Akbar and Jahangir, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi,1972,pp.92-102.; William Wilson Hunter's History of British India, Vol. II,pp.94-100.

[82] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. IV, p. 173.

[83] William Foster(ed.), The Embassay of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, pp.447,468.

The years 1618-21 saw the English making serious efforts to open trade with Bengal. Hughes and Parker, two servants of the company were sent to Patna to erect a factory there and to explore the further possibility of silk trade with Bengal.[84] At Patna, he (Hughes) found large quantities of raw silk which were brought in boats from Bengal but the wastage and cost of transport to Agra rendered the purchase of raw silk at Patna unprofitable for them.

Hughes continued to be of opinion that the purchase of Bengal silk at Patna would prove very profitable and as late as August 1621, he and Parkar were directed to purchase 100 maunds of Bengal silk.[85]

Two years later in November 1623, the English obtained the much-desired firman from the Emperor Jahangir by demonstrating their naval power. According to an agreement between the English and Emperor Jahangir, the English were granted the right of free trade throughout the Mughal Empire including Bengal.They were promised freedom of trade in the ports, "Surat, Cambay, Sinda and Bengala, as in all other cities and places within the dominions of Jangere Padshah, without prohibition of any

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[84] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21, p.116.

[85] Ibid., Introduction, pp.xxiii-xxiv

commodities to be brought in or exported out of the kingdome, neither limitation confininge them either upto places, times or quantities, where, when or how much of any merchandieze, could or raialls they shall so bringe in, carrie away or transporte from place within or without the aforesaid dominions".[86]

A regular attempt to open trade with Bengal seems to have commenced with the voyage of the 'Hopewell' despatched in July 1631 under the charge of Thomas Robinson who was sent from Masulipatam. The enterprise "fayled of its expected successee; " yet proved not altogether frutelessae, having thereby laid a good beginning to a future hopeful trade.[87] The second adventure in the Pearl proved no better. She had been sent from Armagaon to exchange lead, quick-silver, vermillion, cloth, etc., for rice, butter and piece goods, but the enterprise failed.[88]

The immediate cause for the shifting of the English to Bengal is to be attributed to the great scarcity of cloth and provisions at Masulipatam due to the 'miserable tymes full

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[86] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1622-23, p.309.; Ibid., 1624-29, p.27.
The English in order to get compensation for the earlier losses they had suffered at Surat, Broach and Agra, they seized a and detained several Gujrati ships. This might have led the authorities to enter into negotiations with them., Ibid.,

[87] Ibid., 1630-33,pp.182,198,203.

[88] Ibid.,pp.238, 244.

fraught with the Calamitie or Wars, pestilence, and famine and secondly, to the total expulsion of Portuguese from Bengal in 1632.[89]

In October 1634, the factors informed the company from Bengal that goods sold there were extremely cheap and good. While cloth was very cheap while powdered sugar was being sold at 2½ d. a pound including all the charges, silk at 4 to 5 fanams the lb gum lac and several other commodities could be had in plenty. The factors also felt that their goods(English goods) including broad cloth, spices, tobacco, iron, tin and sundry other goods could be disposed off there with suitable margin.[90]

The Surat factors decided to check their investment in many inland factories in Western India in expectation of more propitious times, especially in view of "some dependence upon Bengala, whose present plenty of such commodities promiseth some supplie".[91] The prospects of English trade became dark and their early efforts to establish at Bengal were frustrated because the

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[89] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1630-33, p.182.

[90] Ibid.,1634-36, p.41-42.
The detailed accounts regarding the Portuguese defeat & explusion from Bengal has been quoted in Elliot & Dowson's History of India as told by her Own Historians, Vol.VII, pp.42-43. No less than 1,000 Portuguese were killed,4,400 taken prisoners and out of these 500 youngmen were sent to Agra. The girls were distribed among the harems of the Emperor and nobility, Ibid.

[91] Factory Records, Surat, I, p.230, September 12, 1633.

Portuguese were restored to their former privileges in 1634. However, through the efforts of Surat factors, a phirman was obtained from the Empeor Shahjahan who allowed them to trade afterp paying a certain amount of duty. According to the Phirman, they had the liberty to trade in the whole of Bengal but restricted their shipping only to the port of Piply.[92] But the English with the connivance of local Governor's engaged the trade privileges at Balasore, Hariharpur and Bengal. In 1650, we find the English settled at Balasore and Hugli and from there travelling to inland places for the disposal of their merchandize and for the purchase of the goods there. However, in 1650, the English through the machination of Dr. Gabriel Boughton, who cured the Emperor's daughter were able to receive the imperial sanction of their trade activities in Orissa and Bengal.[93] A letter of 10th January,1652 from Surat, conveys that English had settled a factory at Hugli in 1651 for securing large quantities of saltpetre, silk and sugar. Prince Shah Shuja again granted them trade facilities in April 1656 through his phirman. It (phirman) granted them duty free trade in Orissa and Bengal by abolishing

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[92] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1634-36, pp.12, 204.

[93] Ibid., 1637-41, p.414.; William Foster was of the opinion that the privileges granted to Boughton were personal and not general to the English nation, introduction, p.viiin

anchorage dues and customs duty of 4 per cent. It also provided that they should not be molested and hindered and were "allowed to build factories in any part of the kingdom andfurther assured of the safety of the persons and goods."[94] Prince Shuja therefore, granted a nishan (prince's order) by which the English were allowed to trade in Bengal on payment of Rs.3,000 a year in lieu of all kinds of customs and dues(1652). Their chief exports were saltpetre brought from Patna in boats,silk and suger. Bengal factors informed the company that 'Bengal is a rich province. Raw silk is abundant. The taffaties are various anf fine. The saltpetre is cheap and of best quality. The bullion and pagodas you have sent have had an immediate and most favourable effect on trade; the goods have been sold at a great advantage. Our operations are growing so extensive that we shall be obliged to build new and large warehouses".[95] The English also extended their commercial operations and built new factories at Patna, Decca, Casimbazar, Maldah and secured permission from every new Governor. Shaista Khan, the new nawab insisted on the payment of duties, but the English succeeded evading the payment

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[94] C.R.Wilson, Early Annals of the English in Bengal, Bimla Publishing House,1983(Delhi), Vol.I, p. 9 , (Reprint). R.Barlow and H.Yule, The Diary of Sir William Hedges During his Agency in Bengal, Hakluyt Society,London, 1887-89,vol.III, pp.182-85. Technically, a nishan was a sealed permit as a sign to subordinate officers, William Wilson Hunter, A History of British India, p. 98n.Both nishans from prince Shuja have been reproduced by William Foster in the English Factories in India, 1651-54, pp.415, 111.

[95] R.Barlow and H.Yule, The Diary of Sir William Hedges During his Agency in Bengal, Vol.III, p. 195.;Bruce's Annals,Vol.I, p.544.

of duties by making a regular annual payment of Rs.3,000 to the Nawab.[96] In 1658, the home government reorganised the English settlements in India. All the Company's factories were to be subordinate to the President and Council of Surat. The trade with Bengal was veryprosperous about 1658; as raw silk was abundant, gold and silver sent by the English was early consumed by the purchase of Indian goods.[97]

The English trade in Bengal started expanding rapidly in 1668. The Company exported the goods worth £ 34,000 in 1675 rose to £ 85,000 and in 1677 to £ 100,000 and in 1680 to £ 150,000. In addition to buying local manufactures, the English sent out European dyers to Bengal to improve the colour of the silk cloth bought locally and they inaugurated Bengal pilot service for navigating the Ganges from Hugli to the sea(1668).[98] The business of the company rose in rapid strides in Bengal. During seven years: 1658-64, the clothes ordered from Hugly amounted to 15 thousand pieces per year, but during 1673-78, the order rose to 91 thousand pieces per annum. It had a phenomenal rise in four years of 1680-83 to 455 thousand pieces per annum.

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[96] Records of Fort St. George, Factory Records, Vol. 30,p.38.

[97] Jadunath Sarkar, A Short History of Aurangzeb, M.C.Sarkar & Sons, Calcutta, 1930, p. 403.

[98] Ibid., p.404.

Raw silk was also in great demand. The annual orders rose from 580 bales to 1200 bales in 1679 to 5,740 bales during 1681-85.[99] Bernier's testimony of Bengal trade is of great importance who carried a very high opinion about the productivity and fertility of Bengal and painted a sanguine picture of the goods available in Bengal. He was of the opinion that variety of goods available at Bengal was so great which was 'no where' to be found in the world and as a result a large number of foreigners like Dutch, Portuguese, English from the various parts of the world flocked there. The travellier was highly impressed to note that it (Bengal) not only produced rice but excelled in a variety of cotton goods and silks, including 'cotton clothes of all sorts, fine and others", "tinged and white", which the Dutch exported to Japan and Europe, not to mention what the English,Portuguals and Indian merchants carry away from these parts.[100] The other commodities available in Bengal were butter oil and lac were sent to the other parts of the world.[101] Bengal produced very 'superior' type of rice which was sent to Patna,Masulipatam,Coromandel coast, Maldive islands and Ceylon.[101] Bengal was an emporium of cotton goods as Tavernier remarked about its excellance,"one would not imagine the quality of (silk and silk stuffs) that it hence(Bengal) transported every year,for this country furnishes

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[99] Factory Records, St. George,Vol.XXX,p.38;R.Barlow & H.Yule, The Diary of Sir William Hedges During His Agency in Bengal, Vol.I,pp.42-62; Jadunath Sarkar, A Short History of Aurangzib, pp.403-04.

[100] Francios, Bernier, Travels in Mogul Empire, translated & Edited by Archibald Constable,S.Chand & Co.,Delhi,1972, Reprint,p.439.

[101] Ibid,p.437.

generally all this great empire of Mogul as far as Lahore and Kabul, must of the other forain parts, sometimes seven or eight hundred men of the natives at work on their factory of Kassem Baszar;as the English and other merchants have their's in proportion". Further, 'It (Bengal) also abound in sugar,so that it furnishes with it the kingdoms of Golkonda and Karnataka where there grows but very little.Arabia also and Mesopotamia are thence provided with it, by the way of Mokha and Bussora; and Persia itself by Bander-Abbas".[102] Bengal had also trade relations with Achin as rice,wheat,oil,sugar and stick lac were regularly sent from there."In a word Bengale abounds with every necessary of life; and it is this abundance that has induced many Portuguese,Dutch to seek an asylum in this fertile kingdom".[103]

Hugli

The river Hugli was one of the most admirable rivers in Bengal,the Europeans particularly Dutch and English were carrying lucrative trade at Hugli and other adjacent places.[104] The factory at Hugli was established in 1650 under the 'firman'

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[102] Francios Bernier,Travels in Mogul Empire,translated & Edited by Archibald Constable,pp.439,437.

[103] Ibid.,pp.438-443.

[104] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.),A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal,p.166.
The River was named after the name of the Hugli Town upon its banks 'neare 150 miles up from the Braces of Shoals that lye at the entrance theref'. The city was very populous, famous and sumptuas', Ibid., p.167.

said to have obtained by Gabriel Boughton. In 1657, Hugli was made the head factory in the Bay of Bengal, the factory of Balasore being subordinate.[105]

In 1661, theE English Agent at Hugli seized a native vessel and came in severe conflict with Mirjumla, the Governor of Bengal and Orissa who then ordered that all English boats laden with saltpetre, coming from Patna, were to be stopped at Rajmahal. The Governor was highly enraged by the piratical act of the English. He demanded immediate restoration of the vessel, and an adequate compensation, otherwise he threatened to destroy all their settlements in Bengal. Alarmed at this, the English Agent, advised by the Madras Presidency to restore the boat and to apologise to Mirjumla. Trevisa, accordingly submitted and was pardoned, but the 'Viceroy' contimued to exact the annual payment of 3,000 ruppes.[106] In 1674, the Agent at Hugli received orders to keep the saltpetremen constantly employed so as to have a stock always ready for shipment.[107] Clavell in his accounts of trade at Hugli wrote in 1676, "Hugli having the advantageous upon the banks of river Ganges, whose branches came from the country above and spread wide thereabouts".[108]

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[105] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p. 168f.

[106] C.R.Wilson, The Early Annals of the English in Bengal, Bimla Publishing House, Delhi, 1983, Vol.I, pp.34-35, (Reprint); Bruce's Annals, Vol. I, pp.560-561.

[107] C.R.Wilson, The Early Annals of the English in Bengal, Vol.I, p.46.

[108] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol.I, p. 263.

Streynsham Master, the agent for 'coast and Bay', who came to Bengal in 1676 to reorganize its trade decided to make Hugli as the 'chief seat' for he found it as the most convenient halting place for the ships.

The Dutch had a very advantageous trade in Bengal and their factory was situated upon the bank of the river. The factory was constructed in a very befitting manner as Bowery remarked that it was built on a great space at the distance of musket shot from Ganges.[109] Streynsham Master alongwith Clavell visited the Dutch factory and found it very large and 'beautifully constructed' with two Quadrangles.[110] It has been an established fact that Portuguese were the founders of Hugli port. Hugly port must have been founded between 1568 and 1573, according to the version of Abdul Hamid Lauhori since Ceasar Fredick, a venetian traveller, who visited Bengal in 1567 found the port of Satgaon and not of Hugly. He attested to the very fact that the port of Satgaon was very popular and every year thirty to thirty five ships laden with various goods like rice, cloth of Bombast of divers sort, lac, sugar, mirabolans, long pepper and other goods set sail to the other parts.[111]

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[109] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.169f.

[110] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p. 263.

[111] Samual Purchas, Purchas, His Pilgrims, James Maclehose & Sons, Glasgow, 1905, p. 114, Vol. X.

The Dutch who brought the goods to Bengal were copper and gold from Japan, tin from Malaya, pepper, conchshells, elephants teeth, cloves, mace, nutmegs, brimstone, quicksilver and vermillion. They carred from Bengal, rice, oil, butter, hemp, 'Cardage', sail cloth, raw silk, silk wrought, opium, turmeric, gingham, carpets, hangings, brawls, sugar, long pepper and bees wax.[112]

In the 17th century, Hugli was mainly an entrepot of the trade complex of the English East India Company. The English trade in the beginning was 'carried' in a very limited scale and in the native vessels. For the years the court had been urging the navigation of Hugli in order to spare the expense entailed by transhipping the company's goods in Balasore road. In 1669, the year Thomas Bowery arrived in India, there also arrived seven men, the pioneers of the Bengal pilot service, the only one of whom to attain to note was George Herron. In 1672, Captain James brought the Rebecca upto Hugli with the aid of a pilot and earned the extra 20 to 28 per ton promised by the court. The lack of pilots was the initial difficulty and was not until after 1679, when Captain Stafford brought the Falcon upto Hugli, that it became general for the company's ships to unload at Hugli instead of at Balasore.[113]

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[112] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, p. 83. For the details of the Dutch trade in Bengal, See Kistoff Glamman's article "Bengal and the World Trade about 1700," Bengal Past and Present, Vol. LXXVI, 1957, pp. 30-39.

[113] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p. 166f.

The reference to the navigation of the estuary of Hugli, the main commercial approach to Bengal. When the English Company decided in the year 1650, to establish a factory on the port of Hugli, the Directors ordered the Lioness to be taken up the river but the project was abandoned.[114] The year 1668 witnessed the inauguration of the Bengal Pilot service. The court had shown desire that the English ships should be taken upto Hugli, but first it was considered quite dangerous.Moreover, the native pilots were expensive and the owners refused to rsk their ships without proper pilots. Accordingly in 1667, the Court had built a small vessel called the Diligence and directed that she should be employed in the river and should take sound-ings, note shoals and channels and make a chart of them. In 1668, the court reiterated and complted their instructions. In order to rain the young men in the work they "entertained as appren-tices for seven years. George Harron, James White, Thomas Massen, James Ferbone, John Floyd and Thomas Bateman", all these persons were paid from 6 to 8 pounds per annum. The labours of these six persons showed useful results and they got an accurate knowledge of the topography and navigation of the Hugli. Herron was first to take the lead and gave the accurate knowledge of the river Hugli.[115]

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[114] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.166f.

[115] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1666-50, pp.viii,xi, Introduction.; W.H.Moreland,(ed.), Relations of Golconda in the Early 17th Century, Hakluyt Society,London,1931 p.40m.

So during the 17th century, Hugli was the principal port of Bengal, where the Europeans namely the English and Dutch were carrying a very lucrative trade. The trade at Hugli declined when the English withdrew from there and settled a factory in Calcutta in 1690, following a war with the Mughals in Bengal.[116] According to Thomas Bowery, "the town of Hugli was not very uniform in shape but it was a 'good and pleasant place,'inhabited with the some of the richest merchants of the kingdom. The commodities brought from Orissa, Bengal and Patna were sold in 'Public Bazar' commonly called 'Great Bazar' by reason that there were many "cotton, course calicoes,provisions, etc. were to be sold" .[117]

According to Temple(Richard Cannae) Hugli was fairly large, its length rendered it pleasant as it was built on the bank of Ganges. The streets were wide; they were not paved.There were pretty walls, fine buildings after the fashion of the country, well stocked shops; convenient houses, depots for all kinds of merchandize, particularly silks, fine linen and other materials from all the provinces in India. There were many 'moor' merchants who carried a lucrative trade there.[118]

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[116] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.168 .

[117] Ibid., 168 .

[118] Ibid., 168 .

According to Alexander Hamilton, "This town of Hugly drives a great trade, because all foreign goods are brought thither for import, and all goods of the Bengal are brought hither for exportation. Moguls custom house is also located there. It affords rich cargoes for 50 or 60 chips yearly, besides what is carried to neighbouring centres in small vessels - all the particular species of goods that this rich country, produces is far beyond my skill.[119]

Thus, Hugli was an important commercial centre because of the abundance of goods available there - out of them Saltpetre and sugar were more conspicious as they were found in 'plenty' there. As early as 1651, the Hugli factors were asked to provide 160 or 180 tons of sugar for Persia for which they were authorized to borrow or draw on the Agra factors to the extent of Rs.15,000.[120]

Dacca

It was a great town in 17th century extending itself 'only in length'. The length was two leagues. Every one was 'conveting to have an house by the Ganges side. Tavernier saw there a row of houses separated one from the other, and inhabited by carpenters who built 'galleys' and other small vassels. These

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[119] William Foster(ed.), A New Account of the East Indies, being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, London, 1930,Vol. II,pp. 20-21.

[120] William Foster (ed.), The English Factories in India, 1651-54, p. 110.

houses are, properly speaking, only miserable huts made of bamboo, and mud which is spread over them. Those of Dacca are scarcely better built, and that which is the residence of the Governor is an enclosure of high walls, in the middle of which is a poor house merely built of wood. The Governor resides under tents, which he pitches in a large court in this enclosure".[121]

Alexander Hamilton calls Dacca as the largest city in Bengal known for its cotton and silk manufactures which were the 'best and the cheapest'. The plenty and cheapness of provisions was incredible and the country was full of inhabitants.[122]

The English factory was started about the year 1666. In a letter to Hugli dated 24th January,1668, the court commented on the information received in the previous year that 'Dacca was a place that will vend much Europe goods and the best Sossaes, Mulmuls, etc., may there by procured'. If the factors at Hugli with the 'same of the richest merchants' of the kingdom. If the factors at Hugli were of opinion that the settling a factory at Dacca would result in a large sale of broadcloth, they had liberty given them, 'to send 2 or 3 fitt persons thither to reside'

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[121] V.Ball, translator, Jean Baptiste Tavernier Travels in India, Vol. I., p. 128.

[122] William Foster,(ed.), A New Account of the East Indies, being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton,Vol.II, p. 23.

In 1668 permission was granted to form a new establishment in Dacca, the Capital of Bengal, celebrated for the fineness of its muslins and the beauty of his woven stuff., R.Burlow(ed.) and Henry Yule, The Diary of Sir William Hedges During His Agency in Bengal, Vol. III, p. 195.

From this it appears that the Dacca factory did not receive official sanction until 1668. In 1670, it was in full swing with John Smith as Chief of the Factory.[123]

Kasimbazar

The English factory at Kasimbazar was established in 1658, with John Ken as Chief.[124] Kasimbazar, a village in the Kingdom of Bengal, produced every year two and twenty thousand bales of silk(22,000), every bale weighing a hundred livres. The Hollanders usually carry away six or seven thousand bales either for Japan or Holland.[125]

"A very famous and pleasant towne, famous in many respects, first and chiefly for its great commerce and plenty of very rich merchants, the only market place in this kingdome for all commodities made and vended therein, whence it reached this name, Cossum signifieinge the husband or chiefe, and bazar a market".[126]

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[123] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.151f.

[124] George Birdwood, Report on the Old Records of India Office, W.H.Allen & Co., London, 1891, p.219; John Fryer calls it a Castle Buzzar, p. 38n.

[125] V.Ball, translator, Jean Baptiste Tavernier Travels in India,; Vol.II, pp. 2-3.; 22,000 bales weigh, 2,200,000 livres at 16 onces to the livre. About the silk, Tavernier remarked, "The silk of Kasmimbazar is yellow, as are all the crude silks which come from Persia and Sicly. But the people of Kasimbazar know how to whiten theirs with a lye made of ashes of a tree which is called Adams fig, which makes it as white as the silk of Palestine". The Dutch carried their silk alongwith other goods from Kasimbazar to river Ganges from where it was further sent to Hugli and other places, Ibid., p.4.

[126] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.) Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.230.

"The English and Dutch both were having their factories at Kasimbazar, but the English were certainly enjoying a more advantageous position because of their better trade position and facilities conferred on them by the Governor.[127]

The Dutch factory was established at a distance of one mile from the English factory and was constructed in a 'magestic manner' with fine bricks and handsome gardens.[128]

According to Alexander Hamilton, English had a very profitable trade at Kasimbazar and would invest considerably in buying commodities like cotton goods, specially silk, 'dyed in the English manner'. The Chief of Kasimbazar was second in command and would look after the affairs of the English Company at Orissa, Bengal and Patna.[129] The Chiefs at Kasimbazar, during the ten years comprised in Thomas Bowery's Account were John Marshal, Mattheas Vincent, and Sir Edward Littleton.[130]

Mattheas Vincent has given a detailed account in the Diary of Streynsham Master about 'the manner of silk and Taffaty investments in Cassambazar'. He says, "in dyeing the silk, black

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[127] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.231.

[128] Shafaat Ahmad Khan, (ed.), John Marshall in India, Notes and Observations in Bengal, Oxford University Press, London, 1927, p.20

[129] William Foster (ed.), A New Account of the East Indies, being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, Vol.II, p.21.

[130] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.214f.

looses about 1/7 and the colours ¼ of what it weighed when delivered the dyer, when the silk comes from the dyer it is charged with the same value it was in the whole, when put downe to be dyed, the dyed silk both organise and tram are delivered as they come from the dyer to the weaver, who winds and wraps them and fits the same himself for his worke... forh his whole workmanship he receives one rupee twelve annas per peace of 20 covids long, whether 1 or 2 covids wide..."[131]

There are frequent references to the 'diers and throwsters' at Kasimbazar in the contemporary records. In 1668, Roger Fowler was sent out by the Court as a dyer at Kasimbazar at a salary of £ 60 per annum. Orders were given 'to treat him civilly... hee being an ancient person, and one who hath lived in good repute in London till it pleased God to make him a sufferer in the late dreadful fire'.[132] In a many cases the 'diers and Throwsters' went to India as soldiers or sailors and afterwards obtained permission to change their occupations. Many of the weavers were natives, but there were exceptions, e.g. Michaell Lowene who came as a soldier in 1672 but later

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[131] Richard Carnac Temple (ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, pp.326-330.

[132] Letter Book, No.4, p. 202.

turned to be a silk weaver in 1657. In March 1676, the Council at Fort St. George wrote to Hugli, "We have given leave for one throuster... to goe downe alongwith Mr. Clavell for the honourable company's service at Cossumbazar.[134]

On 14th November,1678, the factors at Kasimbazar wrote to Hugli, "John Gryffeth our former throoster... intends to returne home soe that we shall have oceasion for one to minde that imployment".[135]

The output from Kasimbazar factory was considerable as the entries like the following are frequent. "In the afternoone (31st July,1676) arrived five boats with 309 bales of silke, and seven chests of ordinary taffatyes from Cossumbazar".[136]

"The Directors have lost no opportunity of urging their servants in India to perfect the art of dyeing at Kasimbazar. In December,1671, they wrote, "We are glad to see that our factory of Cassambazar is so well improved, wee how given you directions for our investments and also send you patternes of Taffaties, we see the fancy of that people are much upon mixt collours, and that they have not skill to dye good

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[133] Letter Book No.4, p. 202.

[134] Factory Records, Fort St. George, No.18., p.

[135] Factory Records, Hugli, No.7, p.

[136] Factory Records Hugli, No.1, corroborated from Thomos Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, pp. 214-215f.

blacks and greens and watchetts, but wee hope our Dyesh hath soe farr improved, that wee shall receive some commetent supply..."[137]

Thus, Kasimbazar was the site of one of the most important factories of the East India Company in their mercantile days, and was indeed a chief centre of all foreign trade in Bengal during the 17th century.

Rajmahal

On the right hand of the Ganges, Rajmahal was situated. It was an excellent place for hunting and also for trade. Later, the importance of the town as a trading centre, shifted to Dacca.[138]

John Marshall has given a good account of Rajmahal in his diary. According to him, they(Marshall) and others reached Rajmahal on 8th April, 1670, where they stayed for three days and John Marshall made a careful examination of the deserted palace of Shah Shuja, Nawab of Bengal. The English had no factory at Rajmahal and the house used by the company's servants who transacted business with the officials in charge of the Mughal mint at that place was of insignificant size, consisting of only 3 little small rooms and one little upper room.[139]

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[137] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.215f.

[138] V.Ball, translator, Jean Baptiste Tavernier Travels in India, Vol. I., p.125. Rajmahal, well known town on the Ganges was made the capital in 1592, Ibid., p.125n.

[139] Shafaat Ahmad Khan, ed., John Marshall in India, being his Notes and Observations, p. 70.

From Rajmahal to Monghyr, the journey occupied a week. On 13th May, Marshall again reached Rajmahal. It was his third visit and he made close observation of Shah Shuja's palace and garden, and moved around the 'much broken' paved streets and watched the coming of ruppes at the Mughal mint. Leaving Rajmahal after one day's halt, the party spent the night in a huge Sarai(inn) at 'Bara Jangal', a place known to accommodate more than 800 persons. At this place, Marshall had some difficulty with the customs officer, who demanded 'bakhshish' but was no match for the Englishman who promptly appealed to the Governor and produced his credentials, upon which the Governor instantaneously reacted and rebuffed the officer and then caravan proceeded on its way.[140]

Calcutta

The English settled in Calcutta* "about the year 1690, after the Mughal had pardoned all the robberies and murders committed on his subjects". Job Charnock was the Company's agent

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[140]Shafaat Ahmad Khan, (ed.), John Marshall in India, being his Notes and Observations, p. 70.

*Calcutta, prounced as Kalikata or Kalikatta, a name of uncertain etymology. The first mention that we aware of occurs in the Ain-i-Akbari. It is well to note that in some early charts, such as that in Velentijn, and the oldest in the English pilot, though Calcutta is not entered, there is a place on the Hoogly Calcula or Calcutta, which leads to mistake. It is far below the modern Faulta., H.Yule and A.C.Burnell, Hobson-Jobson, A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, ed. by William Crooke, p. 146.

in Bengal and had the liberty to settle an emporium in any part on the river's side below Hugli. For the sake of a large shady trees, he chose that place and founded the city of Calcutta, "though he could not have chosen a more unhealthful spot on the whole river".[141] According to the estimate of Alexander Hamilton,"one year he was there, and there were reckoned in August about twelve hundred English, some military, some servants to the Company, some private merchants residing in the town and some seamen belonging to Shipping lying at the town and before the beginning of January there were four hundred and fifty burials registered in the Clerk's book of mortality".[142] He further adds "the company has a pretty good hospital at Calcutta, where many go in to undergo the penance of physic, but few come out to give an account of its operations".[143] Calcutta when Hamilton visited it, consisted of a group of European building which clustered round the park, now Dalhousie

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[141] William Foster(ed.), A New Account of the East India, being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, Vol.II, p.7, In Ormes history, Job Charnock is described as 'Governor of the Factory at Golgot near Hughley'. Robert Orme, Historical Fragments of India. The Frenchmen Luiller and Sonnert confused Hugli with Calcutta and called it as Golgouthe, while the latter calls it 'Gologota", H.Yule, & A.C.Burnell, Hobson-Jobson, A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Pharses, edited by William Crooke, p.146.

[142] William Foster(ed.), A New Account of the East India, being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, Vol.II, p.8.

[143] Ibid. Alexander Hamilton says - "A little higher upon the East Side of Hughly river is Ponjelly, a village where a corn mart is kept once or twice a week, it exports rice more than any place. About a league father up on the other side of the river, is Governapore, where a small pyramid is built for landmark to confine the company's colony of Calcutta or Fort William", Ibid., p.7.

square. About fifty yeards from Fort William stands the Church, built by the charity of merchants residing there, and the Christian benevolence of sea faring men whose affairs called them to trade there; but ministers of the Gospel being subject to mortality, very often young merchants are obliged to officiate, and have a salary of £ 50 per annum". There was a fort and within the fort there was an official residence for the Governor, and convenient lodging for factors and writers. The Governor had applied for a state carriage for Church going, but his frugal masters at home informed him that "if he wanted a chaise and pair he must pay for them himself".[144]

Luiller, who visited Calcutta (1701) also records his impressions about English factory. He says, "The next morning we passed by the English factory belonging to the old company,which they call Golgotha, and is a handsome building, to which were adding stately warehouses."[145] Hedges who visited Calcutta in 1688 says, "Soe myself accompanyed with Capt. Waddock and the 120 solidiers, we carryed from hence embarked and about the 20th September arrived at Calcutta".[146]

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[144] William Foster(ed.), A New Account of the East Indies,being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton,pp.9,6.

[145] Le Siuer Luiller, Voyage to the East Indies,1715, p. 259.

[146] R.Barlow & Henry Yule (Eds.), The Diary of William Hedges During His Agency in Bengal, Vol. II, p.LXXXIX.

According to Hamilton again, "Calcutta has a large deep river that runs to the eastward, and on the west side, there is a river that runs by the back of Hugly island, which leads upto Radnagar, famous for manufacturing cotton, cloth and silk rummals or handkerchiefs". The other speciality of Calcutta was sugar".[147] Calcutta gradually began to emerge as an important centre of trade as its deep river attracted the trade from the Dutch and French settlements higher upto the river, and the Indians and Armerian merchants began to clock to a place where they felt secure. So the trade began to grow

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[147] William Foster,(ed.), A New Account of the East Indies,being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton,Vol.II, p.6.

In 1681, the Bengal establishment was separated from Fort St. George and William Hedges (24 November,1681) was appointed 'Agent and Governor of the factories in Bengal'. But on his dismissial in 1684, Bengal was again made subordinate to Madras. In 1684, William Gifford, President of Madras came upto Act in Bengal." The following were the "Agents and Chiefs of the Bay, subservient to the Presidents of Madras - John Beard 1684-85, Job Charnock, who removed the headquarters of the English from Hugly to Calcutta 1688-1693, Francis X Ellis 1693-94, Charles Eyre 1694-1699, John Beard 1699. Bengal was finally separated from Madras and Sir Charles Eure(December 20,1699) was sent out as "President of Bengal and Governor of Fort William", William Wilson Hunter, A History of British India, Vol. II,p.252n.

at Calcutta but unhealthy climate of Calcutta caused considerable panic among the Europeans and particularly the English living there as 'Death overshadowed every living soul".[148] However, within a decade after Charnock landed on the deserted river bank in 1690, it had become a very busy market, with 1200 inhabitants.[149] By the middle of 1692, they had firm footing in Calcutta. The official records complain that Job Charnock secured a larger investment in that year than he had funds to pay for. On January 10th, 1693, Charnock died and was burried in Calcutta, near the site of the old Cathedral of Calcutta.[150]

After the death of Charnock, Goldesborough visited Chutanuttee and found it in great disorder. The English by that time had not received any permission to have the settlement or fortify the place. Accordingly, Sir John ordered a spot to be enclosed with a mud wall whereon to build a factory. When permission should be granted and bought a house for the Company, which he intended to enlarge and use for offices. In 1696 when Charles Eyre was agent at Calcutta, the long delayed permission was virtually given by the Nawab, and a little later a nishan* was

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[148] C.R.Wilson, Early Annals of the English in Bengal, Vol.I, p.208.
[149] William Wilson Hunter, A History of British India, Vol.II, p.268.
[150] Ibid., p.269.

*Nishan literally a 'sign' in the form of a sealed document or flag, or other emblem from the local authority of the district or province., Ibid., p. 51n.

received from prince Azim-ush-Shan for a settlement of the Company's rights at Chutanuttee. In 1699, the Company made a valiant bid and Bengal was declared a separate presidency and its fort was to be called Fort William in honour of the King William III, and Sir Charles Eyre becoming the first President and Governor of Fort William in Bengal.[151]

Thus, we see a considerable trade was carried on by the English Company in the 'Coast and Bay', meaning thereby the whole Eastern coast of India and Bengal. The English chartered annually about half a dozen ships, carrying between them somewhat more than 2,000 tons for the outward and homeward voyages which occupied about a year or so.[152]

Therefore, the East Coast and specially Bengal was the most 'coveteous' place for the Europeans from the trade point of view as they carried a lucrative trade therein the 17th century.

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[151] C.R.Wilson,(ed.), Old Fort William in Bengal, Vol. I, John Murry, London, 1906, pp. xvii-xix, Introduction.

[152] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p.132.

CHAPTER VI

PRINCIPAL EXPORTS : SPICES, INDIGO AND SALTPETRE

References to various commodities of trade have already been made in the previous chapters. However, the ordinary items of the export trade were mainly calicoes, saltpetre, indigo, pepper, drugs and various other provisions. Over and above all these things spices formed the main hunt of the English in this country.

Spices

The importance of Indian spices increased when the English were 'driven away from the East Indies by the Dutch. Abul Fazl has mentioned the various spices available during the time of Akbar:

Items	Price in dam per seer
Saffron	400
Cloves	60
Round Pepper	52
Long Pepper	17
Dry Ginger	16
Fresh Ginger	4

Items	Price in dam per seer
Cumin seed (Zeera)	2½
Ani Seed (Saunf)	2
Turmeric	10
Siahdana (Kalaungi)	1½
Assofoetida	2
Cinnamon	40 1

Tavernier found Cardamom, ginger, pepper, nutmegs, mace, cloves and cinnamon to be familiar to the English.[2] The prices of various spices at Surat in 1609:[3]

[1] Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I., translated by H. Blochmann, Asadish Book Depot, Delhi, 1965, p. 67.

[2] V. Ball, (tr.), Jean Baptista Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol. II, Macmillan & Co., London, 1889, p.13.

[3]

Items	Prices per maund in Mahmudi
Myrrh	10
Turbith	5
Aniseed	1
Fenugreek	¾
Sweet Fennel seed	4
Cuminseed	2 or 3
Ginger Green	8
Ginger Dry	10 to 80
Assofoetida	10 to 80
Turmeric Preserved	2 (came from Balaghat)
Olibanum	4 or 5
Sal Ammoniac	9 or 10

Frederick Charles Danvers, (ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East, Sampson Marston & Co., London, Vol. I(1602-13), p.31, 76.

Cardamom grew in the kingdom of Bijapur and ginger in that of 'Great Mogol' and other kinds of spices which were imported from abroad to Surat formed nonetheless an important article of commerce. Writing about the importance of cardamom as a 'rare' and 'expensive' commodity, he (Tavernier) remakred that "Cardamom is the best type of spice but is very scare and as but a quantity is used in Asia at the tables of nobles. 500 livers of cardamom are sold at from 100 to 110 reals". Ginger minaly came from Ahmadabad where it grew in large quantity and was exported to the foreign countries in its raw form.[4]

Pepper was in demand long before the East India Company was established, it was partly obtained from Lisbon, and partly through the medium of Levant or Turkey company. The supply from Lisbon was stopped by the war which took place with Spain at the latter end of the 13th century. The Dutcy, by overthrowing the Portuguese domination obtained a considerable share in the eastern trade and as a result the price of this article rose in the British market from 4s to 8s per lbs. In 1592, English captured a Spanish ship, Madre De Dios and a large quantity of pepper which formed a part of her cargo in England. This capture greatly helped the English in forming the opinion of direct trade with India. For many years after Company's

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[4]V. Ball, Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Macmillen & Co., London, 1889, Vol. II, p. 13.

One rial was equivalent to 4s 6d. Editors note, p.13n.

establishment, pepper remained the most important article of export.[5] Tavernier also threw a great deal of light on the types and centres for the 'pepper production'. Pepper was of two kinds; 'large' and 'small' and was subsequently called by the same names commercially. The large pepper came from Turicorin and Calicut, two important towns in Malabar. Some 'large pepper' was grown at Bijapur but was mostly sold at Ragapur* in Ratnagiri district. The small pepper was imported into this country from southeast Asia (mainly from Bantam and Achin). According to Tavernier most of the small pepper was consumed by the Muslims in India. The small pepper was heavily stuffed with seeds. 'For in a pound of small pepper there are dobble the number of seeds that there are in a pound of large; and the more grains in the pillaus, into which they are thrown by the handful , the more are seen, besides which the large pepper is too hot for the mouth". This pepper(small) was sold at Surat at the rate of 13 or 14 mahmudis per maund.[6] As far as

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[5]William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, Vol.II, London, 1813, pp.286-287.

*Regapour in the original was Rajapur, a town in the Ratnagiri district. It was an important port but in due time lost its importance and became unaccessible to the large vessels. In 1661 and 1670, the town and factory was attacked by Shivaji, V.Ball,(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.II, p.13n.

[6]"It may be remarked that the whole pepper obtained in the bazars and commonly used in cookery in India, is a much smaller,less pungent and generally inferior seed to that which comes to Europe", Ibid., 14n.

'large pepper' which the Dutch got from Malabar, was being sold at Surat at the rate of 38 rials for 500 livres.[7]

About the mode of purchasing the pepper Tavernier remarked that "one can get it fro the equivalent in money of 28 or 30 reals cash, but to purchase it in that way would be much more costly than the Dutch method. As for large pepper, without going beyond the territories of the Great Mogul there is enough to obtain in the kingdom of Gujarat, and is generally sold at the rate of 12 to 15 mahmudis for the maund, the wood of long pepper costs but four mahmudis.[8]

Bengal , Malabar and a few places in Asia produced long pepper which was used more for medicine than for ordinary food. According to Wilson, long pepper was produced at a place 16 kos away from Hugli. It was had for 4 or 5 rupees per maund and in the shipping, it is usually worth 9 to 10 rupees, but much of it must not be bought because of it being bulky, and will not vend.[9]

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[7] V.Ball,(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.II, p.14.

[8] Ibid..

[9] C.R.Wilson, Early Annals of the English in Bengal,1895-1917, Bimla Publishing House, Delhi. Vol. I, 1983, p.380 (Reprint).

In 1615, Sir Dudley Digges defended the Company's trade from the attack made by the British Parliament stating that the annual consumption of this country was 450,000 lbs. per annum". Sir Dudley was correct in this assertion, pepper must have been at that time in more general use than at subsequent periods.[10]

According to Phillip Baldaeus, a Dutch traveller, the chief products of Malabar were pepper and cardamom. Cochin produced 'great quantities of pepper' while as Canore's pepper was the best and purchased by the merchants from Carnatic and Bijapur in large quantity. The pepper of Calicut was less in weight as compared to Canore and Cochin. It was sold in 'Canda' at the rate of 390 or 400 fanams a 'Canda'(a fanam was equal to 10 pence). In 1640, the price rose to 450 fanams. The pepper grew in shady places and the 'stem was weak like those of vines'. Each stem 'bears commonly six bunches, every one a foot long, resembling a colour to on grapes before they are ripe". They (pepper) were gathered in October and November and later on (after plucking) spread on the mats to be dried in the Sun, till it grew complete black. Besides pepper, Malabar produced ginger too.[11]

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[10]Dudley Digges, The Trade's Increase, London, 1615, pp.43-44.

[11]Phillip Baldaeus, A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar, John Churchill, London, 1703, pp. 558-59.

In 1621, Thomas Mun in his pamphlet, 'A Discourse on Trade' showed that the annual consumption of spices in Europe were 6,000,000 lbs. In 1623, Malynes, in his "Centre of the Circle of Commerce", quoted the cost price of pepper in India at 2½ d. per lb., and the sale price of pepper in India at 15.8d. About this time, the price of pepper at Lisbon was 2s. per lb. The Dutch at this period stated that pepper cost at Java from 5 to 7 dollars a pecul.[12]

Milburn has given a commendable account as how the plant of pepper is sowed and harvested. According to him,"Pepper is the produce of a vine, which in its own climate is hardly a plant, growing readily from cuttings or layers, rising in several knotted stems, twining round ay... i neighbouring support, and adhering by its fibres, that shoot from every joint at intervals of 6 to 10 inches, if suffered to run along the gound, these fibres would become roots, but in this case it would not bear, the prop being necessary for encouraging it to throw out its prolific shoots, it climbs to the height of 20 feet, but thrives best when restrained to 12 or 15, as in the former case the lower part of the vine bears neither leaves nor fruit whilst in the latter it produces both from within a foot of the ground; the stalk soon becomes ligneous and in time acquires considerable thickness.[13] The leaves are of a deep

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[12]William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, p.286.

[13]Ibid., p. 285.

green and glossy surface, heart shaped, pointed not pungent to the taste and have a little smell. The branches are short and brittle, not projecting above two feet from the stem and separating readily at the heints; the blossom is small and white the fruit round, green when young and full grown and turning to bright red when ripe. It grows abundantly from all the branches, in long small clusters of 20 to 50 grains, somewhat resembling bunches of currents, but with this difference, that every grain adhers to the common stalk, which occasions the clusters of pepper to be more compact. The plant begins to bear in third year, is considered to be the best in the 7th year and continue to remain so far 3 to 4 years and then gradually declines. The pepper plants produces two crops a year but the seasons are subject to great irregularities. As soon as any of the berries redden, the bunch is reckoned fit for gathering, the remainder being then generally full frown; although green, it is then gathered and spread on mats in the sub; till it becomes black as dries, is rubbed with hands to separate the grains from the stalks.[14]

Pepper mainly produced on the Malabar Coast and was considered the best. There were two types of pepper used in trade; black and white.

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[14]William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, p. 286.

Black Pepper

It was again of two types; light and heavy, the former in original state was dirty and full of impurities and having 'bad grains'. It was very much popular in Far East, especially China so it was mostly sent there in its raw form. But this 'impure variety' was not much in demand in Europe, so it was, before sending, thoroughly cleaned and impurities were removed. It was termed as the heavy pepper was extremely hot and would give burning sensation to the tongue when tasted and had a pungent smell.[15]

White Pepper

It was also of two sorts, common and genuine, the former was made by removing the grains from the black pepper. For such like operations the best and the "pepper with strongest grains" were selected and dipped in water and allowed it to remain there for a week till the grains were separated from the skin and then it was spread in the Sun till it become 'extremely black'. This was considered to be ideal for the exports to Europe especially England as the 'best or soundest grains' were selected for the operation and was completely free from the impurities.[16]

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[15] William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, p. 285.

[16] Ibid., pp. 30-32.

In 1621, Thomas Mun, a business magnet of London and one of the Director's of the East India Company published a treatise in favour of the East India trade, stating therein the Indian merchandise annually consumed in Europe and the total expenses incurred on it by way of Aleppo, the old route and by Cape of Good Hope, new route.[17] (Table I to III)

It seemed that during the three years from 1616 to 1618, 14,32,186 lbs. of pepper bought at an average cost of 2½d. were imported into England per annum and sold at an average price of 24½d. per pound. But during the decade after the expulsion of the English from Amboyna i.e. from 1621 to 1630, the average importation fell down to 14,28,667 lbs per year, the price paid in the East rose from 2½ d. to 4½ d. per pound during this decade and the selling cost lowered down to 18 d. on the average.

£ 2,18,000 worth of pepper were sent out in the year 1614 alone. The return cargoes from the East which realised in London, £ 876,557 from 1621 to 1623, were largely in spices.[18]

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[17] William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, p. 30.

[18] Ibid., p.298.

For the further details of Spice Trade, see Bal Krishan, Commercial Relations Between India and England,1601-1755, George Routledge & Sons, London, 1924, pp.88-91.

Table VI.I

Cost of Various Spices in India, Aleppo and England as Shown by Thomas Mun.

Annual Importation	Cost on Board in India		Selling Prices in England	
	s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	£ s.d.
250,000 lbs. Pepper	0 2½ per Lb.	26,041-13-4	1 8 per lb.	208,333-6-8
150,000 lbs. Cloves	0 9 per lb.	5,625- 0-0	6 0 per lb.	45,000-0-0
150,000 lbs. Nutmegs	0 4 per lb.	2,500- 0-0	2 6 per lb.	18,750-0-0
50,000 lbs. Mace	0 8 per lb.	1,666-13-4	6 0 per lb.	15,000-0-0
200,000 lbs. Indigo	1 2 per lb.	11,666-13-4	5 0 per lb.	50,000-0-0
107,140 lbs. China Raw Silk	7 0 per lb.	37,499- 0-0	20 0 per lb.	107,140-0-0
50,000 pieces of Calico	7 0 per lb.	17,500- 0-0	20 0 per lb.	50,000-0-0
		£ 102,500-0 -0		£ 494,223-6-8

Source: William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, Vol. I, London, 1813.

Table VI.II

Cost of Various Spices in India, Alexandria and England as Shown by Thomas Mun

Annual Consumption	Lowest Ancient Prices		Common Modern Prices	
	s. d.	£ s.d.	s. d.	£ s.d.
400,000 lbs Pepper	3 6 per lb.	70,000-0-0	1 8 per lb.	33,333-6-8
40,000 lbs. Cloves	8 0 per lb.	16,000-0-0	6 0 per lb.	12,000-0-0
20,000 lbs. Mace	9 0 per lb.	9,000-0-0	6 0 per lb.	6,000-0-0
160,000 lbs Nutmegs	4 6 per lb.	36,000-0-0	2 6 per lb.	20,000-0-0
150,000 lbs. Indigo	7 0 per lb	52,500-0-0	5 0 per lb.	37,000-0-0
		£ 183,500-0-0		£ 108,333-6-8

Thomas Mun in the above Table estimated the annual consumption of the above mentioned goods in England and gave a comparative view of the lowest prices of them, when imported from Turkey or Lisbon, before England imported any from India, William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, London, 1813, p. 33.

Table VI.XXI

Cost of Various Spices in India, Aleppo and England as Shown by Thomas Mun (1621)

Annual Consumption	Cost at Aleppo		Cost in India	
	s. d.	£ s.d.	s. d.	£ s.d.
6,000,000 lbs Pepper	2 0 per lb.	600,000-0-0	0 2½ per lb.	62,500-0-0
450,000 lbs.Cloves	4 9 per lb.	106,875-10-0	0 9 per lb.	16,875-0-0
150,000 lbs.Mace	4 9 per lb.	35,625-0-0	0 8 per lb.	5,000-0-0
400,000 lbs.Nutmegs	2 4 per lb.	46,666-13-4	0 4 per lb.	6,666-13-4
350,000 lbs.Indigo	4 4 per lb.	75,833-6-8	1 2 per lb	20,416-12-4
1,000,000 lbs.Raw Silk (Persian)	8 0 per lb.	500,000-0-0	8 0 per lb.	400,000-0-0
	£	1465001 -10-10	£	511458-05-08

Source: William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, London, 1813.

After the English tragedy at Amboyna, the English largely concentrated on the Malabar pepper which now could be obtained due to the loosening monopoly of the Portuguese. £ 15,000 worth of pepper was ordered by the company in 1623, while the total value of goods demanded for home was £ 78,219. 2,118 bags of pepper were carried in the ship Charles in 1630. In 1639, the Malabar pepper was sold at 3s. 6½d. on the average at the Company's sales. In the seven years from 1664 to 1670, the quantity of pepper imported was 9,426,387 lbs. or on average 13,46,667 lbs. per annum, which it was evident that making a large allowance for the home consumption, there must, have been considerable quantities exported. In 1673-76, it appeared that ginger had become a substitute for pepper, and the sale of pepper, in Italy, Turkey or the North of Europe had failed, on account of the wars in Poland, and the price had considerably fell to 7d per lb. in England. The Company sent the instructions to all the 'pepper producing centres' fixing the purchase price at 2½d or at the most 3d per lb.[19]

In 1680, Papillon who wrote an important book based on the 'East India Trade', stated the quantity of the pepper annually consumed in England was at 100,000 lbs. at 8d per lb.*

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[19] William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, pp. 288-289.

*T.Papillon, East India Trade: A Most Profitable Trade to the Kingdom, London, 1677, quoted by William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, p.288.

Therefore, the principal investment of the English in Southeast Asia (principally at Bantam and its neighbouring islands) was in pepper till they were expelled by the Dutch from these islands. After their expulsions from there, they tried to procure the spices from Malabar. Here, too Dutch after throwing away the Portuguese monopoly did not like intrustion by the English. But the Dutch with all their zest, power and diplomatic understanding with the princes of Malabar could not oust the English or dismantle their factories or even could not prevent them from securing the desired quantities of pepper.

From 1670 onwards, 400 to 450 tons were equally sent to England while in some years as much as 1,000 tons were shipped by the company.[20]

The English became more dependent on the Malabar especially when the Southern supplies became more insecure. The pepper settlements of the English on the West Coast of India developed into the important centres of trade. In the five years of competitive trade, from 1698 to 1702 inclusive 27 1/3 million lbs. were brought into London. Such vast quantities stand unparalled in the history of English commerce and they reveal the inexhaustible resources of the Malabar country for its supplies of pepper.[21] In the year 1699, along claimed 19,635,610 lbs. of pepper.[22]

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[20] William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, p. 289.

[21] Bal Krishan, Commercial Relations Between India and England, 1601-1757, p.149.

[22] Letter Book, XIV, p. 168.

After the pepper next spice was cloves. Not less than 50,000 lbs. of cloves seemed to have been consumed in England in the year 1614. In 1620, however, the amount greatly increased and reached the figure of 1,30,000 lbs. Before the interruption of this trade by the Dutch its price was about 4s. a lb.[23] The profits reaped by the East India merchants were very large. It was bought in the East for 9d a lb. and sold here for 6s. a lb. Malynes, however, estimated it at 8d. a lb.[24]

Next to cloves, were mace. The price of mace was 10s a lb. in 1614.[25] The importation of spices was, however, not given a general approval and was subjected to harsh criticism by Parliament, therefore, Mun defended the trade.

Thus, spices retained its top position as the important item of export trade due to its expensive nature.

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[23]Dudley Digges, The Trade's Increase, London, 1771, p. 44.

[24]Shafaat Ahmad Khan, The East India Trade in the 17th Century, S.Chand & Co., New Delhi, n.d., p.9.

[25]William Foster,(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East, Vol. I & II, Shafaat Ahmad Khan, The East India Trade in 17th Century, S.Chand & Co., Delhi, 1923, p.9.

III. Indigo

The plant indigofera tinctoria (Latin) and the dark blue dye is made from it. Greeks called it by the name of IVOLKOV. This word appears from Hippocrates to have been applied in his time to pepper. It is also applied by Dioscorides to the mineral substance called Indian red. Lidell and Scott called it a dark-blue dye indigo, used in Egyptian mummy cloths.[26] Pliny has given a good account of Indigo. He says, "after this... Indico is a colour most esteemed; out of India it commeth, where upon it tooke the name, and it is nothing els but a slimie mud cleaving to the fome that gathereth about caves and reeds; whiles it is punned or ground, it looketh blacke, but being dissolved it yeeleth a wonderfull lovely mixture of purple and azur... Indico is valued at 20 devari the pund. In physicke there is use of this indico; for it doth assuage swellings that doe stretch the skin".[27]

Marcopolo (1298) described that, "they have(at Collum) also abundance of very fine indigo (Yude). This is made of a certain herb which is gathered and (after the roots have been

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[26] Henry Yule and A.C.Burnell(eds.), Hobson-Jobson. A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1968, p. 437.

[27] Ibid., p. 437.

removed) is put into great vessels which they pour water and then leave it till the whole of the plant is decomposed".[28]

William Finch who gave the prices of goods in India found indigo the most important item. Finch on August 30, 1609 gave the following varieties of Indigo produced in India:

Indigo	Prices in Mahmudis per maund
Biana near Agra	40 to 60 mahmudis per maund
Sarkhej(a place near Ahmadabad) and two days journey from Cambay	25 to 30 mahmudis per maund
Jamusar(between Cambay and Surat)	15 to 20 mahmudis per maund.

Finch was of the opinion that large quantities of Indigo could be had from India and William Hawkins also attested and remarked "that best indigo could be purchased at the rate of 25 rupees a maund, which is about 15 rials of 8 .")[29]

Pyrad called it 'Anil or Indigue which is a violet-blue dye".[30] But the prominent visitors like Varthema and Barbosa, who otherwise have given good accounts of the country and its produce have not made any mention of Indigo. During the 16th

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[28] E.P.Duttan, The Travels of Marcopolo, p. 221.

[29] Frederick Charles Danvers, Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East.1602-17, Sampson Low, Vol.I., London,1900,p.28.(August 30, 1609).

[30] Albert Gray,(tr.), The Voyage of Francois Pyrad of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil, Hakluyt Society, London, 1888,Vol. I, p.328.

century, a host of travellers who flooded in Western India, have made a specific mention of Indigo as they found it as an important item of exports. The chief provinces engaged in the cultivation of Indigo were Lahore, Agra, Multan, Allahabad, Gujrat, Delhi as given in the statistics of nineteen years by Abul Fazl.[31] There is an abundant evidence that when European traders first began to purchase and export, the dye, it was procurable in Western India and shipped from Surat. It was carried to Lisbon by the Portuguese and further sold to the dyers of Holland. But with the formations of the Dutch and the English East India Companies, in the 16th century, there began rivalry for the monopoly and trade of Indian goods out of which indigo formed the most important item of trade as it was at that time in great demand in all countries of Western Europe for suppl ing the blue dye required by the staple woolen industry.

Indigo was used both for internal and external consumptions. It was used to dye various kinds of cloth. But it was also used to dye the skin and hair. The refuse of indigo (beet) was often used as manure by cultivators. The indigo yielding plant(especially the leaf) is rich in nitrogen and also contains a comparatively large amount of mineral matter, while

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[31] H.S.Jarret,(tr.), Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1891, Vol. II, pp. 76-93.

its ash contains rather a high percentage of magnesia.[32]

The Mughal Emperors maintained the Karkhanas or factories of their own for the manufacture of articles of different kinds including cotton and silks. The popularity of indigo due to the heavy purchases made by the English and the Dutch after their arrival in India probably led the Emperor Shahjehan to declare it a monopoly.[33] Tavernier remarked that 'Indigo comes from different localities of the Empire of the great Mogul, and in these different localities, it is of various qualities, which increase of diminish its price'.[34]

At this time indigo was widely grown in India. It was produced at various places in Gangetic Plain, in Sind, in Gujrat, in the Deccan, and along the East Coast. The exporters (mainly Dutch and English) recognised mainly the two varieties; Biana and Sarkhai.

The best and richest indigo was known as Agra indigo which was produced in the towns near Agra known as Biana Panchoona, Bisur and Khanwa.[35] Of Khanwa, Finch (1608-11),

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[32] George Watt, Commercial Products of India being an Abridgement of Dictionary of the Economic Products of India, John Murray, London, 1908, pp.664-667.

[33] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India, 1630-33, p.209.; 1634-36, pp.69-70,72.

[34] V.Ball, (tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.II, p. 8.

[35] W.H.Moreland and P.Geyl,(trs.), The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert, Idarah-i-Adabiyat-I Delli, Delhi, 1972,p.13.
Pelsaert called these towns as Patchiona, Bassower and Chanowa Ibid.

remarked that it was a 'small town round about which was made very good nil (indigo) by the reason of the fatness of soil and blackishness of water'.[36] About Biana, Finch remarked that 'Citie hath been great and faire, but is now ruinate, save two Sarayes and a long bazar, with a few stragling houses'.[37] But this place according to him was most suitable for the production of Indigo which was the best in India, far superior to Sarkhej, Ahmadabad or any other variety in India. About the method of preparing Biana indigo, he remarked, "the herbe nill groweth in forme much unlike chive or allium or chickpea, having a small leafe like that of sena but shorter and brooder and set on a very short foot-stalke, the branches hard and a woodie substance like broome. It usually groweth not above a yard high and with a stalke at the biggest(which is at the third yeare) not much exceeding a man's thumbe. The seede is included in a small round codde about an inch long. It carryeth a small flower like that of hearts ease. The seed is ripe in November and then gathered. The herbe once sowne dureth three years, being cut every yeare in August and September after the raines. That of the one year is tender and

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[36] William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India, S.Chand & Co., Delhi, 1968, p.151 (Reprint).

[37] Ibid..

thereof is made notee[38], that of the second yeers is rich and called cyeree,[39] very light and of a perfect violet colour, seimming on the water; in the third yeare the herb is declining and this nil is called catteld,[40] the worst of the three. This herbe being cut a month aforesaid, is caste into a long cisterne, where it is pressed downe with many stones and then filled with water till to be covered;which so remaineth for certain dayes,till the substance of the herbe be gone into the water then they let the water forth into another round cistern,in the middest of which is another small cisterne or center;this water being thus drawne forth,they labour with great staves,like butter or while starch, and then let it settle,scumming off the cleare water on the toppe;then labouring it afresh,and let it settle,againe, drawing forth the cleare water;doing this oft,till nothing but a thicke substance remaine,which they take forth and spread on

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[38] George Watt concludes that this term is derived from nauha, the young plant. See George Watt,Commercial Products of India being an Abridgement of Dictionary of the Economic Products of India, p.668.

[39] Jari,Sprouting from the root; William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India, p. 153n.

[40] Khutiyal or Khunti; William Foster(ed.),Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East,Vol.VI,p.24. The words used by Mundy, Palsaert and others like Nauha (Young Plant), for the second year jari and for the third year Kautiyal, are not to be found in the modern works and therefore, appear to have gone out of use. They are however,generic terms for various sorts of crops grown from seed. P.Geyl & W.H. Moreland(eds. & trs.), The Remonstrantie of Francisco Palsaert, p.13n.

cloth to dry in the sunne; and being a little hardened, they take it in their hands and making small balls, lay them on the sand to dry'."Foure (Four) things are required in Nill, a pure graine, a violet colour, his glosse in the sunne, and that it be dry and light, so that swimming in the water or burning in the fire, it cast forth a pure light violet vapour, leaving a few ashes".[41]

Joseph Salbank remarked that Biana was two days' journey from Agra. It was the chief centre of Indigo trade. The best and richest quality of indigo was found at Biana. The indigo (Biana) grew on small mushes and its seed was like that of cabbage. After it was cut down it remained in heaps for half a year and then it was trodden out. The best Biana indigo was selling 8s a lb. in England in 1614.[42] Peter Mundy has also given a good account of as how the indigo was sown at Biana. He remarked that gounds were ploughed and made in order in the beginning of rainy season. When the rains stopped they sowed the seeds and when the plant attained a good height they would pluck the leaves which were thrown in big well-plastered tanks having the capacity of five to six tons of water. The leaves were allowed to remain in water for 48 hours and then stirred vigourously till the water changed its colour. After that the water was thrown out through various holes

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[41]William Foster,(ed.), Early Travels in India, pp.152-54.

[42]Samual Purchas, Purchas, His Pilgrims,Vol.VI,James Maclehose & Sons, Glasgow, 1905, p.84.

and was brought out and dried till it became very hard like paste. They formed it into lumps christing it together in their hands which being again put to dry.[43]

"Of exports, indigo which formed the chief loading of the fleet of 1615, maintained its importance throughout this period, owing no doubt to the great demand for it in Europe for dyeing purposes. The Biana indigo inspite of its high price and the distance it had to be brought was much preferred to that of Sarkhej and in 1624, the company ordered that no more than two-thirds of indigo shipped should be of latter type".[44]

Dodworth and Master Edward along with the other members of the English East India Company left for Agra on 2nd December, 1614 from Ahmedabad for making purchase of indigo. They could procure only 170 bales of indigo (at Ahmedabad) and the 'party' left under the heavy guards.[45] On March 17, 1618, Francis Fetiplace at Agra wrote to the factors at Surat that despite their

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[43] Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey,(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Hakluyt Society, London,1907, Vol. II, pp.221-23.

[44] William Foster(ed.), The English factories in India,1624-29, p.35.

[45] William Foster(ed.), The Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies, Hakluyt Society, London, 1939, p.109. It was always customary to keep the armed guards for indigo caravans for the fear of being attacked by highway robbers.

best efforts, to bring down the prices of Biana indigo they could not do much and only 80 fardles were purchased after a great deal of labour.[46]

Thomas Kerridge, Thomas Rastell and Giles James informed the factors at Ahmadabad on March 16, 1618 that indigo was purchased in Aldeas(villages) at 24 and 25 rupees a maund. The price was likely to fall.[47] Thomas Kerridge wrote again to John Brown at Ahmadabad in January 1622 that 1,000 or 1,200 bales of Biana indigo would be sent to Ahmadabad yearly as it was cheaper than Sarkhej.[48]

In 1624, the factors at Agra wrote to the company that the prices of Indigo at Biana had 'shot up' and its value was three times more than Sarkhej.[49] In 1624, 1,200 bales of Biana indigo were shipped to England. Its price was 36 and 37 rupees a maund including the charges of transport.[50] On September 24, 1624, in a consultation held at Surat under the chairmanship of Thomas Kerridge, it was decided that Hopkinson should be asked to purchase 1200 churles of biana indigo and for this purpose 8,000 rupees were remitted to him.[51]

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[46] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21, p.189.

[47] Ibid., p. 184.

[48] Ibid.,

[49] Ibid., 1624-29, p. 36.

[50] Ibid., p.335.

[51] Ibid., 1630-33,pp.216,255,280.

On 24th April, 1632, the Council at Surat wrote to the Company that 1,200 fardles of Agra indigo were ordered to be sent to England. Again on 4th January,1633, the Surat factors informed the Company that 1,480 bales of Biana indigo were ready to be despatched in James for England while another 2,000 bales of Biana were tried to be procured for Mary by the factors at Agra. According to another letter written in 1637, Agra indigo was sold in fardles. Every fardle contained 117 'vaqueas' after the rate of 24½ pice just weight Agra indigo was sold at 125 rials for one fardle.[52]

President Breton, Thomas Harry andRichard Fitch at Swally wrote to the Company on November 28,1644 that both Sarkhej and Biana had declined in quality and therefore, loosing its popularity in England. Moreover, much dirt was discovered in Biana indigo which considerably lowered the reputation of it.[53]

For the purchase of Biana indigo, advance or the ready money was always given as otherwise the indigo procurement was not possible. The following letter would reveal this fact:

On January 1629, the factors at Agra wrote to the President and Council at Surat that 193 fordles of Biana indigo were purchased at the price of 32½ to 35 rupees a maund. The factors pleaded that they would have certainly purchased the

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[52] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1630-33, pp. 216,255,280.

[53] Ibid.,1637-41, p.201.

entire stock of indigo but for the 'ready money', they could not buy it. However, the Dutch had purchased 500 fordles of indigo while they wanted 1,000.[54] The factors at Surat informed the company on March 28, 1625, that the Dutch had given 17,000 rupees in advance and had purchased 700 fardles of biana indigo.[55] The factors informed the Company on December 1640 that Bornford had procured 480 bales of biana indigo out of which 200 were sent to England in Crispiana.[35] The Dutch in 1640 tried to lower the prices of Biana through continuous persuation of 'dalals', but the prices could not be lowered down and the English had also to buy at the same rate of 40 rupees a maund.[56] Again Robinson and Wylde wrote from Swally Marine to the Company on December 29, 1640 that Crispiana had arrived there with 450 bales of biana indigo.[57] On 27 January,1644, the factors at Surat wrote to the Company that 505 bales were purchased at Agra which were found to be 'good and moderate'. The dearest variety was selling at 33 rupees a maund.[58] President Breton and Messrs. Merry Blackman, Pearce and Oxenden wrote from Swally marine to the company that indigo sent by them was 'the best to their satisfaction and would

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[54]William Foster, The English Factories in India,1642-45, p.201.

[55]Ibid., p. 189.

[56]Ibid., 1637-41, p. 42.

[57]Ibid., 297.

[58]Ibid., 1637-41, p. 297.

certainly be liked by you'(Company). However, high rates were regrettable. Moreover, the quality in general had gone down due to the want of rains. For the next year only 200 bales were ordered to be purchased due to bad quality. The factors further informed the company that ideal season of buying indigo was October and November. The English had bought the indigo prior to the indigo season for fear that the Banias, Moors and Armenian merchants may not buy it for sending it to the Middle East. Therefore, English had to buy it much earlier than the 'indigo season' as the brokers were not able to keep it with them for a long time.[59]

Richard Davidge at Delhi wrote to the President and Council at Surat on January 4, 1651 that Indigo biana had become a rate commodity and only 100 bales were available at Biana and 50 at Khurja. The Indian merchants, especially Hindu merchants refused to sell their indigo less than 47 rupees a maund.[60] The Surat factors confessed by writing to the Company in 1652, 'that Biana indigo has hitherto most gainful commodity'.[61]

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[59]William Foster, The English Factories in India, 1646-50, p. 254.

[60]Ibid., p. 9.

[61]Ibid., 1651-54, Introduction.

Indigo for Middle East

The Biana variety of Indigo was mostly in demand in Persia and the Armenians and Muslim merchants used to import large quantities of it there. In 1628, 1,500 bales were sent to Persia on English and Dutch ships alone.[62] William Bell, Henry Darell and others at KUHESTEK (a small port on the Persian coast) wrote to the Surat factory that Biana indigo was most popular in Persia and was worth "560-600 Shahis the 'Kella' of seven maunds Shah" while Sarkhej was 480 Shahis 'Kella'.[63] The English after reaching soon Surat captured 'a rich share in indigo trade as is evidenced by the Surat letter to the Company dated 31st March, 1630, wherein they specifically mentioned that they had begun to supply daily great quantities of indigo and calicoes to the Arabian and Persian markets which before them was sent by 'others' both by sea and land.[64] President Fremlen

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[62] William Foster, The English Factories in India.1630-33, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1909, p.125.

[63] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India.1622-23 pp.22-23, Kulah equal to man's load.Ibid, 23n.

[64] William Foster, The English Factories in India.1630-33,Pp.124-Persia was a principal importer of indigo from India. It was carried there by Armerian and Moor merchants both by land and sea. The Agra indigo followed the usual overland Agra-Multan-Chotiali-Pishin-Kardhar-Herat-Meshhed route. See J.N.Sarker, Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India, 1637-41, Oriental Publishers, Delhi, 1972, p. 172.

and Messrs Breton, Robinson Wylde at Swally marine wrote to the Company on December 29, 1640 that there was some miscalculation in the wright of indigo due to the very fact that Thatta maund was double the Surat. Spiller was instructed to confirm the investment in indigo for Persia and Basra.[65] President Breton and Messrs Merry Knipe, Tash and Pearce at Swally marine to the Company on January 6, 1648, that they have purchased a good quantity of Indigo at Agra and neighbourhood in obediance to the Company's orders, reserved most of the bales for Persia. The Company instructed the factors not to pay more than 40 rupees a maund.[66]

Again President Breton and Messrs Knipe, Tash and Pearce at Swally marine wrote to the Company that on January 25, 1647, Sarkhej indigo was sent in Eagle to Basra and was not of high quality but still they could lay hands on only 200 bales at a cost of 22½ rupees a maund - the only available variety. The English had expected to procure 500 bales of Agra indigo but got only 461 bales and 400 out of them were sent to England in Dolphin while 61 were reserved for Basra. The indigo purchased was found to be 'excellent and pure', and every precaution was observed by the English buyers before purchasing it. The indigo was thoroughly checked and tested before making a purchase of it.[67]

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[65] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1637-41,p.277

[66] Ibid., 1646-50, p. 184.

[67] Ibid., p.77.

The Price of Indigo in London

Year	Sarkhej	Biana	Coromandel
1618	5s per lb.	6s 2½d.	2.8½ lb was discarded later on, in form of other two
1619	4s 6¼ d.	5s 4d.	
1620	4s 10d.	5s 6d.	
1622			
January	5s 4d	5s 8d.	
April			
July			
1621			
September	4s	7s	
November	3s 9d	6s 8d.	
1624			
1625	4s 6d		
March 11	3s 4d		
March 14	4s 2d		
July 4s	4s 4d		
November	3s 4d		
1626			
February			
September	3s 2d		
1627			
January			
February			
April	3s 8d	6s 1d	
1628	3s 6d	-	
1629	3s 10d	5s 9d	
1630			
1631	5s per lb	for mixed indigo 5s 10d	
1632	-		
1633	-		
May15	-	6s mixed	
May 24	-	5s 8d. mixed	
1634	-	6s	
October 3	-	5s 6d	
October 17	-	-	
1635	-	5s 7d	
1636	-	-	
1637	5s 6d	6s	
1639	-	-	
1640	-	11s 7d [68]	

[68] K.N.Chaudhuri, The English East India Company, the Study of an Early Joint Stock Company, Frank Cass Co., London, 1965, p.180.

Sarkhej

It was situated at a distance of about 5 miles from Ahmadabad. The town, though not very populous, was considered an ideal place for the production of indigo due to the 'fatness of soil'. Here indigo was prepared by water while in other parts by fire. It was the cheapest and best found in India. The article produced at Sarkhej was made up in the form of cakes and was flat as "distinguished from the variety produced in Biana which was purer and was designated as round from the fact that it was made up in balls".[69]

Withington described the town of Sarkhej as such: "In this city town, was a very delicate Church i.e. the Chief Masjid and fayer tombs, had a very 'fair and pleasant garden' and the houses were very stately built".[70] A Dutch factor Phillip Baldaeus has given a detailed account of the manner of making Sarkhej indigo. He says that "Indigo shrub had small twigs like those of black berry. The indigo grew for three years successively after its first sowing. The first year they cut the leaves

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[69] William Foster,(ed.), Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies,1610-14,pp.113-114. "Sarqueese in the original, this is Sarkhej, the Surkeja of Major Scott's Madras route map to Southwest of Ahmadabad. Tieffenthaler calls it Sarkes.V.Ball, (tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.II,p.69n.

[70] William Foster,(ed.), Early Travels in India, p. 207.

when the plant reached a foot's height. The leaves thus plucked were dried in the sun for twenty four hours and later put into barrels full of salt water. The water to be continously and vigorously stirred for four or five days till it thickened and the indigo was settled at the botton. The sediment was then separated from the water and was spread on the ground to dry". Indigo was regarded as good if it was light and gave a feeling of dryness when put between fingers. It floated upon water and when thrown upon coals it gave violet coloured smoke and thus left little ashes behind.[71]

On December 12, 1613, English factors Dodsworth alongwith Edward and Aldworth went to Sarkhej to buy indigo.Dodsworth found the people of Sarkhej quite 'poor and in utter destitute conditions and were willing to sell their indigo in large quantity'. The 'party' stayed there for four days and every day they managed to buy 100 bales. The 'party' returned to Agra after purchasing 700 churles*(bales) for England. 40 carts were deployed to bring indigo back to Ahmadabad from Sarkhej.[72]

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[71] Phillip Baldaeus, A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar and Coromandel,John Churchill, London, 1703, p.593.

[72] William Foster,(ed.), Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies,pp.109-110.

*Indigo,Saltpetre,Sugar, silk and cotton yarn as well as piece goods were transported in bales,packs and fardles. The size of a bale was a matter of convenience and depended whether they were stacked at wharfside or slung across camels and oxen, Owen C.Kail, The Dutch in India, Macmillan, Delhi, 1981,p.221n.

Nicholas Downton who visited Sarkhej in 1614 confirmed the account left by Dodsworth as he also found the people of Sarkhej utterly poor, depending solely 'upon their indigo production'. He, however, informed that 'they were purchasing 100 bales a day' as they found it more cheaper. Downton was of the opinion that a factory should be established at Ahmadabad since it was near Sarkhej where much quantity of indigo could be purchased and stored at Ahmadabad and sent to England.[73]

In 1613, the factors informed the Company that'owing to the vital differences between natives and Portuguese, the prices of Sarkhej had risen from 16 to 18 rupees a maund.[74] On August 19, 1614, Thomas Aldworth informed the Company that indigo round (Biana) and flat (Sarkhej) was very cheap and expressed his intention of buying the maximum quantity of both the varieties.[75] On December 1620, James Brickford and John Clark informed the President and Council at Surat that Dutch had shifted

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[73] William Foster,(ed.), Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies, pp.112-113.

[74] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. II, pp.13-15.

[75] In my article, "Indigo Trade in the 17th Century",published by Panjab University Research Bulletin(Arts), Vol.XI,No.1-2, April-October,1980, I have made a specific mention of the two varieties of Indigo produced in India, Biana and Sarkhej.

to Sarkhej from Cambay in order to purchase Sarkhej indigo and frustrate the attempts of English in buying the indigo. They (Dutch) had purchased 90 maunds of indigo at the rate of 9½ ruppes a maund.[76] In 1620, Sarkhej indigo sent in 'Royal Anne' consisted of 1,104 fardles and the total amount spent in purchasing other goods besides indigo a was 274942 Mahmudis - 74 pice. Again on November 7, 1621, 200 bales of Sarkhej indigo were sent in Eagle to London.[77]

Indigo sent in 1623 to England consisted of the following varieties:

7,000 maunds of Sarkhej
1,000 maunds of Ahmadabad

Again in March 25,1623, Mahmud Taqi, the Diwan of Ahmadabad expressed his desire to sell 1300 to 1400 churles of indigo to the English.[78]

John Skibow, President Thomas Kerridge, Wylde and others in a consultation held at Surat on September 4, 1625, thought carefully to bring down the prices of Sarkhej indigo which had

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[76] William Foster, (ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. II, p. 4.

[77] William Foster, (ed.), The English Factories in India, 1618-21, p. 47.

[78] Edward Heynes, John Parkar and William Hill at Ahmadabad to Surat Factory on June 9, 1623, Ibid., 1622-23, pp. 181, 212.

gone high due to the machinations of Dutch, the latter were earnestly desirous of securing the profits in indigo trade. The ship Dolphin was expected to go back with 402 churles of round indigo at 51 ruppes a churl of four maunds. They(English) were forced to pay rupee higher due to the advancement of rainy reason. 580 bales of Sarkhej indigo were purchased at the rate of 12½ to 13¼ ruppes a maund (old stock). The new Sarkhej indigo was purchased from 13½ to 15¼ ruppes a maund with a view to send it to England. The factors regretted the high cost of indigo but this was the most 'superior variety' available there that time.[79]

Indigo was sent in fardles. The ship Globe was despatched to England carrying a rich lead of 1167 fardles of Sarkhej indigo which weighed 6632 small maunds.[80] Much of the Sarkhej indigo sent to England in 1643 was little inferior to Biana.[81]

The prices of Sarkhej and Biana indigo fluctuated considerably as the account taken for three years would reveal in the table given below:

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[79] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1624-29, p.200

[80] Ibid.,1642-45, p.84.

[81] Ibid.,p.85.

Table

Price Fluctuation of Biana and Sarkhej Indigo

Indigo	1638-39	1639-40	1640-41
Biana	106.3	93.3	76.4
Sarkhej	90.6	58.1	56.6[82]

The decline in the price was mainly due to the adultration and the competition of supplies from America. The indigo trade almost ceased after Aurangzeb's reign.

By 1642, the quality of Sarkhej indigo had 'gone down' alarmingly as there were frequent complaints from 'Company's Directors in England'. The other reason for its decline was its mixing direct in order to increase the weight(this type of adultration was a regular feature of indigo trade which later on killed the indigo industry. Dutch also lodged the similar type of complaints.[83]

In February 1642, the President and Council at Surat informed the 'Company that Sarkhej sent to England was inferior to Biana. The factors further wrote that indigo makers at Ahmadabad were asked to prepare indigo from green leaves, as was done in Agra.[84]

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[82] D.Pant, Commercial Policy of the Mughals, Taraporewala & Co., Bombay, 1930, p.208.

[83] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1642-45,p.201.

[84] Ibid., p.85.

President Breton, Thomas Marry and William Pitt at Swally marine wrote to the company on September 25, 1647 that Sarkhej which was sent to England in Eagle was not of good quality, yet it was the 'only available indigo' in the market which could be had. The English were successful in procuring 200 bales at a cost of 19 to 22½ rupees a maund. The entire indigo was to be sent in Dolphin to England.[85]

Again the factors at Surat wrote to the company by way of a complaint that the price of indigo had fallen considerably due to 'fayling markets'.[86]

Ahmadabad Indigo

Ahmadabad in Gujrat was the most suitable place for the manufacturing and production of indigo. The best type was made at three centres of the city.[87] The indigo made at Ahmadabad was from green leaves which was considered good and pure.

In 1614, a heavy purchase of Ahmadabad indigo was made by the English and 40 carts were deployed for carrying indigo at Ahmadabad.[88] In 1620, John Bickford and John Clark

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[85] William Foster (ed.), The English Factories in India.1646-50, p.71.

[86] Ibid., p. 161.

[87] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. III, p. 45.

[88] Ibid., Vol. II, p.115.

informed the President and Council at Surat that 9,000 maunds of Ahmadabad indigo was purchased by them as they found it cheap and good.[89] Again in 1621, the Surat President and Council informed the Company at London that though Ahmadabad indigo was 'poor and dear', yet they managed to buy it after a great deal of competition with the Dutch who had already purchased more than 2,800 bales of Ahmadabad indigo.[90]

Travernier has given a good account of the mode of making indigo at Ahmadabad (Gujrat). He says that the plant was sown after the rains and was cut three times a year. The first cutting took place when the plant was two to three feet in height. The colour of the dye made from first crop was a violet blue and it was more brilliant than the dye made from the second crop. After the plant was cut it was thrown into huge vats faced with ghumm or lime, and would often give the marble-like surface. These vats were generally 80 to 90 paces in circut and were filled with water. Then it was mixed and stirred up with water until the leaf was reduced to slime or greasy earth. The vats then remained untouched. It was seen that all the slime had sunk to the bottom thus leaving the water above very clear, the holes made at round the tank were opened to allow the water to go outside. The next step was taken after the water had been drawn.

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[89] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21,p.260.

[90] Ibid., p. 260.

It was to fill up baskets with the slime and the man incharge of each basket carried it to a plain, where taking the paste in fingers steeped in oil, he moulded it into pieces and then exposed them to the sun to be dried. These pieces were made into different shapes by the makers. The indigo makers had to be very careful while sifting indigo as they would keep before their faces a cloth so that their 'nostrills be well stopped". This method to be of preparing indigo as given by Tavernier was considered the most popular and economical.[91]

Tavernier also warned these engaged in indigo trade against inhaling poisonous dust of indigo. Those who sifted the indigo had to keep the mouth and nose carefully covered with a linen cloth, leaving only eyes to follow the operations. Moreover, those who sifted the indigo and others who watched them working had to drink milk every hour as a preservative against the dust in the indigo. Tavernier further remarked, "I have indeed on more than one occasion observed that if an egg is placed in the morning near one of these sifters in the evening when one breaks it, it is altogether blue inside, so penetrating is the dust of indigo".[92]

In September 1626, the English purchased about 7,000 maunds of Ahmadabad indigo. It was of the 'best type' available

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[91] V. Ball (tr.), Jean Baptista Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.II, pp. 8-12.

[92] Ibid., pp. 9-12.

there. Before, buying the indigo, it was 'tested' thoroughly (if swims over the water, the best). The other type was known as the coarse indigo - costs a rupee for 30 seers. The price of indigo was fixed according to its goodness.[93] In 1635, President Methold and Council at Surat wrote to Thomas Lee at Masulipatam that instructions should be sentto Ahmadabad factors that indigo should be 'carefully selected for the despatch to England. The prices of indigo was high due to the competition between English and Dutch.[94] In 1642, the factors at Ahmadabad sent the information to the company at Ahmadabad that the indigo makers tried to make the 'indigo from the green leaf, in the manner of Biana and Sarkhej. The indigo made out of green leaves was considered to be go good and pure1.[95]

There was a sudden decline in indigo trade in 1647 due to 'poor harvest' as the following letter would reveal:

> "George Tash, Hugh Fenn and Anthony Smith from Ahmedabad wrote to the President and Council at Surat on October 4,1649,informing that indigo leaf had much 'fallen in price by reason of the fayling of most of the markets,so that now 45 seers are offered for a rupee, as against 32½ and 33 last year. This they conceive will much further their proposal to make a good quantity, perhaps as much as is likely to be needed for next year's return". 96

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[93] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India, 1624-29, p.292.

[94] Ibid., 1634-36, p. 274.

[95] Ibid., 1642-45, p. 85.

[96] Ibid., 1646-50, p. 161.

Sometimes the unusual weather would contribute greatly to the decline of indigo trade as happened in August 21, 1621, when the crop was damaged due to the 'excessive rains'.[97]

Manner of Packing Indigo

The company wrote a letter to the President and Council at Surat on September 28, 1618 which was forwarded to them at Ahmadabad (where they had gone for purchasing indigo). According to the contents of the letter, the directors showed their concern about the mode of packing things especially indigo sent in the ship Hope of 400 tons. The ship had a sufficient space still the goods were miserably packed. The directors suggested them 'to pack the indigo in the manner Gujratis do when they send their goods to Middle East. In every chest there were two 'Churls'. The 'Chest' was made of a 'round briar very strong but lighter in weight with a calico bag in the chest. The chest was well covered with a skin and thus all the chests would be kept closed. The directors asked them to be careful in future and use the methods as were being deployed by Gujratis. The other instruction was to keep the ship clean so that 'goods are not damaged'.[98]

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[97] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21,p.21.

[98] Ibid.. p. 164.

Interferance and Mughal Attempts to Monopolise(Indigo), 1633.

In 1618, the Governor of Ahmedabad demanded a bribe of one lakh rupees before he allowed the free trade in the commodity.[99] In 1633, Shah Jahan made it a royal monopoly just as Shah of Persia had the royal monopoly in silk in Persia. In 1633, a royal edict confirmed the sale of indigo throughout the Mughal dominions for three years to a Hindu named Manohar Das.[100] He was to be assisted by a loan from the government which was to share the profit that might accrue. The strong dutch and English protests proved of no avail as Manohar Das had the bearing of an influential noble Mir Jumla.

To break this monopoly, a solemn agreement was entered into at Surat on 19th November, 1633 by the Dutch and the English. No party was to purchase indigo for one year save at its own price and the purchase of indigo was to be a joint venture. The Dutch

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[99] In 1618, Prince Shah Jahan was appointed the Governor of Gujrat but he governed through his agents, one of them was Brahman Sunder, styled as Raja Bikramajit, Beni Prasad, History of Jahangir, Indian Press, Allahabad, 1930, p.107.

[100] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India, 1630-33, 1634-36, pp.209, 69, 70, 72, 7-8.
Acting on thesuggestion of Mir Musa or Muiza-al-Mulk, Governor of Surat, Emperor Shahjahan declared the monopoly in indigo in the fashion of Shah of Persia who did in silk. He made a control with Manohar Das Danda, a bania, who was granted the sole right of buying indigo in the kingdom, in return of Rs.11,00,000 in three years. See Jagadish Narayan Sarkar, Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India, p. 178.

and English solemnly pledged themselves, not to accept indigo as freight. This combination compelled Shahjahan to dissolve his partnership with Manohardas and Mirjumla on 14th April, 1635.[101]

Adultration

According to Tavernier, adultration was an important feature of indigo trade. The indigo was mixed with sand and dirt in order to increase its weight. This adultration later on killed the indigo industry. European merchants would often complaint against this malpractice to which Tavernier has also made a reference. According to him, "Thus, after removing the paste from theb baskets with their hands dipped in oil they placed in the sand which was later on allowed to be mixed up with indigo".[102] Adultration in indigo was so great, the purchaser did not know the amount of sand, he was purchasing. Every kind of malpractice grew up and the Governor of Ahmadabad passed emergency orders to check this practice but without much success. Capital punishments were also inflicted in a few cases where adultration was proved but the evil was beyond control. This fraud ultimately killed the indigo industry.[103]

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[101] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1634-36, pp.xi,xiii, Introduction.

[102] V.Ball,(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.II, pp. 9-12.

[103] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1642-45, p.215.

The Company informed the Agra factors that Biana indigo sent to England was found to be good but three bales were found to contain nothing but 'black earth' and 'clay' instead of indigo.[104] Two bales of flat indigo were found to contain nothing but black earth and it was feared that more would be discovered when rest of the bales were to be opened. A good supply of this sort ofindigo should be sent home.[105] The merchants who purchased the indigo were careful not to pay custom on useless weight. Before buying it they would ascertain it by burning a few pieces whether it contains any sand as it would be left behind.[106]

Manner of Purchasing

Purchase of indigo could be made either in cash or barter. Sometimes cash was sent directly from England on ships or funds were obtained by exchange of rials into rupees.

In 1618, John Browne at Ahmadabad tried to procure a good quality of indigo before the ship's arrival. But the matter was delayed as he had to await a supply of money from fleet (Ahmadabad to Company, February 10, 1618).[107]

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[104] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1637-41,p.95

[105] Ibid., p. 58.

[106] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.II, pp. 11-12.

[107] William Foster,(ed.),The English Factories in India.1618-21, pp.7-8,84,100.

Funds were also provided for indigo investments by remittance of bills of exchange from the central factory at Surat to subordinate factories like Agra or Ahmadabad(May29,1619).[108]

In 1619, the Agra factors invested their entire cash in indigo. Bills of exchange were 'closed by the Surat factors to be rescrited' at Ahmadabad and sent to Agra factors.[109]

Another characteristic of indigo trade was a keen sense of competition between the Dutch and the English for its monopoly. In 1637, the Dutch were found paying more money for the indigo at Ahmadabad in order to frustrate all the attempts of the English.[110]

A letter written by the English on May 29, 1619 reads thus: "The high price of indigo is entirely due to the competition between the English and the Dutch and to their allowing their ships to be used by the native merchants for its transportation, for although it was not very usual to send Biana overland to Persia via Lahore, no one would dream of following the same route. Hence, arose the scheme which was greatly helped by a foolish bargains made by the factors. Had both nations abstained this year from buying or transporting the commodity, its price would have come down to 20 rupees a maund".[111]

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[108] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1618-21, pp.84,100.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid.,1634-36,p.142.

[111] Ibid., p.142.

Sometimes the cash remittance of the East India Company proved inadequate and they had to utilise the proceeds of some imported articles like quick silver and broad cloth. A letter..."The great quantities of quick silver brought last year and this not only on the Company's account but also by individuals, have closed all the markets so that it is not worth above 3 or 3½ mahmudis per see. It is, therefore, decided to send to Agra funds for the indigo investment in that place, thus, avoiding the need of borrowing money at interest there".[112]

The absorption of the entire funds of the company at Agra for Anglo-Dutch purchase of indigo compelled the Surat authorities to stop the investment at Ahmadabad and other places in theabsence of remittance.[113]

Besides cash payment for the purchase of indigo,barter was also resorted to. In 1618, the Agra factors sent 951 fardles of indigo to Surat after procuring the same by barter in cloth of which they had overstock. Usually, the money was given in advance before the arrival of the indigo season.[114]

Similarly, the factors at Agra exhausted their entire cash in the purchase of indigo at Biana as is clear from the following letter:

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[112] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1630-33, pp.56,61,82,206.

[113] Ibid.,1634-36,pp.70-71.

[114] Ibid.

"The receipts from Agra this year are 543 bales of Biana indigo, which cost 61 rupees per maund, and not only exhausted all the cash remitted thither by exchange, with all the proceeds of the sale of quick silver and broad cloth but also caused the factors to change 33,000 rupees upon Surat by two bills of exchange at a loss of 8 5/8 per cent". Letter continued... 115

"Adding to the cost of caravans and customs they find that the amount of a good ships loading is contracted into a few fardles of Biana indigo, can only endeavour a better result in future. Hope that next year Sarkhej will furnish good plenty (as is said to excellent indigo, made there this season, yet the contractor brought the greatest part of 18½ rupees a maund".[116]

Rivalry for the Monopoly of Indigo Trade amongst Europeans

The following letter would also reveal the high sense of competition between the English and the Dutch for the monopoly of indigo. According to letter:

"They have done their best to bring down the price of Sarkhej indigo but this will never be effected while both Dutch and English are competing for it. Hoping to send home Dolphin last year, they then brought 402 churles at 51 rupees per churl of four maunds. Since then endeavouring to abate the price, they waited too long and were forced to pay one rupee per maund higher than they might have done before the rains".

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[115] Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India, pp.152-154.

[116] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1634-36, pp.69-70.

"Of Biana indigo 306 bales were provided last year at Agra, costing from 315½ to 316½ rupees a maund, except a small parvel bought green in the villages by many advanced before hand which cost only 24½ rupees. Two hundred fardles of Biana indigo are in readiness at Agra bought by Clement and the rest at 37 rupees or but they cannot be bought down until the country is more settled".[117]

Causes of the Decline of English Trade in Indigo.

The chief reason for the decline of the English trade was the 'excessive' export of Indian commodities and the effect was seen in the scarcity and dearness of latter especially indigo. "At Agra none can obtain indigo less than 43 rupees a maund while at Ahmadabad there is no fall in price".[118]

The other reason of the decline of the indigo trade or for that matter any other trade(export trade) were the natural calamities also caused considerable damage to the indigo crops. The trade in indigo suffered from the vagaries of nature. The Gujrat famine of 1630 proved most disastrous for it. The excessive Biana rains of 1631 turned indigo fields into floating ponds. There was complete destruction of the crop in 1626 and

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[117] The above information was supplied by Richard Wylde, John Skibbow to the Company, January 4, 1628, William Foster, (ed), The English Factories in India, 1624-29, p.208.

[118] Ibid., 1655-60, pp.336, 322.

1646 as a result of attack by the locusts. These factors considerably paralyzed the indigo industry for a long time. The economic effects of the famine of Gujrat in 1630-31 were terrible for the indigo industry. Thus, Ahmadabad which yielded 3,000 or more bales of indigo per year were reduced to only 300. This was due to the lack of 'workers' who either left or dead due to the impacts of famine. However, by 1640, the grievous effect appear to have finally gone and normalacy was restored afterwards.[119] Thus, indigo remained a very important item of export trade of this country in the 17th century.

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[119] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1630-33, Introduction; 1637-41, p. 235.

Saltpetre

Next to Indigo, Saltpetre formed an important item of export trade in India. It was used as an ingredient of gun powder which was particularly in demand in Europe. 'Saltpetre is a kind of artificial salt prepared from nitrates, found from time to time in natural state in many parts of the work, chiefly south America, Persia, Spain, Hungary and India. It has been used extensively for different objects - as an ingredient for gun powder, in animal dyes like lac and cochineal for medical and antiseptic purposes like preservation of fish and meat and embellishing food preparations, for manure,especially of wheat and tabacco, and in glass making bleaching, washing and cooling purposes'.[120]

In the writings of the European travellers, merchants, agents, etc. of the 17th century there was hardly any reference about the various uses of Saltpetre,mentioned above except as an ingredient of gun powder as a ballast for ships and for cooling purposes'.[121]

The increased use of artillery in European warfare had brought about a shortage of this essential commodity and

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120 George Watt, Commercial Products of India, being and Abridgement of the Dictionary of the Economic Products of India, John Murray, London, 1908,pp.972-74. In India it was known by various(vernaculars) names such as Suriakhar,Shora (Sora), Potti-luppu, Veti Lippa,Sorakas,etc.Shora is a Persian name. Ibid., p.972.

121 Jagadish Narayan Sarkar, Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India, Oriental Publishers, Delhi,1975,p.65.

and during the first two decades of 17th century, Dutch and Portuguese were found making heavy purchases of Saltpetre on the East coast. In the beginning of 17th century, the shortage of Saltpetre in England and its excessive availability in India had drawn the attention of company to the possibility of importing this chemical from India.[122] In 1624, the Commissioners of the Navy urged the Saltpetre should be brought from India as was already being done by the Dutch, and later in the same year, the company was told that they must make their own power and fetch their own supplies of Saltpetre. The company apparently ordered a supply from Surat in the year 1620, for an abstract of a report sent here in 1621, states that Saltpetre was to be had in the neighbourhood but four years later Captain Weddell reported that the Dutch were shipping it as a ballast and that the English were trying to get supplies from Ahmadabad.[123]

It, therefore, appeared strange that such an important commodity did not find any mention in the report of Thomas Roe about the goods available at Agra, Patna or Bengal. The earliest mention was made by Thomas Kerridge, the President of English East India Company in 1621, affirming that it was not procurable at Surat.[124] In 1625, the company was informed by Thomas Kerridge at Surat that large amount of Saltpetre could be obtained at very

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[122] W.H.Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1972, p. 119.

[123] Ibid.

[124] William Foster, (ed.), English Factories in India, 1624-29, pp. 83, 209, 215, 270, 278.

cheap rates and would be shipped to England soon. From his letter of January 4, 1628, we learn that large enought quantity had been sent to ballast the ships and they would send a like quantity on every ship, and more if it would be so. On January 1628, 2000 maunds of Saltpetre were brought at 2¼ ruppes per maund, while two months later the price fell to Rs.1½ only.[125]

Saltpetre was obtained from various parts of the country. The Coromandel coast, Gujrat and Agra were first to be explored but these sources became of secondary importance when the buyers made an easy access to Bihar, Orissa and Bengal.

Great stores of Saltpetre, says Tavernier 'comes from Agra and Patna, a town of Bengal, and the which is refined costs three times as much as that which is not. The Dutch have established a Depot at Chopra, which is 14 leagues above Patna; and the Saltpetre being refined there, they send it by river to Hughly.'[126] "They imported boilers from Holland, and employed refiners to refine the Saltpetre from themselves; but have not succeeded, because the people of the country, seeing that the

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[125] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1624-29, pp.278,335.

[126] V.Ball,(tr.), Jean Bantist's Tavernier's Travels in India,Vol.I, p.122.
Chouper in the original, Chuprah or Chapra(Soepra of Dutch writers), headquarters of Saran District,Bengal. Owing to the recession of the Ganges from it, its importance had diminished. At the end of the last century, the French,Dutch and Portuguese had factories there, and Saltpetre of the district was specially famous, Ibid., p.122n.

Dutch wished to deprive them of the profits of refining, would not supply them any longer with, when without the aid of which the Saltpetre cannot be bleached, for it is worth nothing at all if it is not very white and very transparent. A maund of saltpetre costs of mahmudis,5s.3d".[127]

In 1626, we find the English at Surat taking up the export of this commodity, the principal site of supply being Malpur, now a small town in Sabar Kantha District. In its natural state, 'Saltpetre' is bulky and needs to be refined by removing impurities. This was done by the English at Ahmadabad by the local method of evaporation, at first in the earthern vassels, and later in large copper vessels commonly used for this purpose.[128]

Balasore(a district in Orissa) was another place where saltpetre was available though not in great quantity. The English factors,Gurney and Greenhill, informed the company in a letter written in 1652 that large quantities of the commodity could be

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[127] V.Ball,(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India,Vol.II, p.12."The crude saltpetre is obtained by lixivation of the soil on deserted and even occupied village sites. It consists of the potash nitrate and a simple explanation may be given of the chemical reaction which produces it. The nitrogenous waste of the village being brought into contact with potash derived from wood ash, the amonia is converted into nitric acid which combines with potash and salt so formed permeates the soil. A century ago, most of the saltpetre of the world which was used for gun powder came from India;" Ibid, p.12n.

[128] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1646-50, pp.34,255.

obtained from Balasore and Hugli. However, they found the process of its refinement in the copper pans rather very expensive as 200 out of 600 pans were damaged. They felt obliged, therefore, to send saltpetre in its raw form. The English despatched the ship Loyality to England with a rich load of saltpetre on February 21, 1651.[129] The Dutch East India Company was also keenly interested in the trade of saltpetre. They sent in the same year 2,000 tons of the commodity purchased from Balasore.[130]

The total export of saltpetre by the English and the Dutch upto the year 1650 was not very great as they(Dutch and English) were confined to supplies obtainable in Gujrat, and the volume of the trade was comparatively small as the combined purchases of the two nations was not more than 200 to 300 tons per year. It was only later on that the establishment of English and Dutch factories at Patna led to a remarkable expansion of the trade owing to the practically inexhaustible sources in Bihar.[131]

The early references made in English factory records to the purchase and refining of saltpetre at Ahmedabad and Surat in the beginning of the 17th century are of great importance and interest particularly because of the opposition of Mughal Sovereign and Viceroys to its export for India. Not infrequently do we find the sale of saltpetre made a royal monopoly, so that it became an almost impossible. This contingency arose in 1655, when by the

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[129] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1651-54, p.95.

[130] Ibid., pp.100,47,92.

[131] Ibid,1646-50, p.155.

orders of the Emperor Shahjahan, a stock of 10,000 double maunds of saltpetre were officially stored at Ahmadabad.[132] Prince Aurangzeb as Viceroy of Gujrat in 1645, gave strict orders against the sale of this commodity. The reason for this opposition was attributed to his religious zeal. A factor writes in 1646, "We find an unexpected impediment in the saltpetre provided raw, to be refined in Ahmadabad... The prince (very superstitious) possessed by some of his Churchmen that it is not lawful for him to suffer us to export that specie which peradventure may be employed against Moors,he hath strictly inhibited its delivery unto us".[133] Perhaps the Mughal Government was too shrewed to allow its sale freely as they were aware of the fact that the English may not use it against them. A Surat factor writing in 1653 says, "The Governor of Ahmadabad pretending orders from the King to that effect refused to allow any saltpetre to be exported thence and has further stopped all coming through from Agra".[134] Again a letter from Surat in 1654 which ran as, "As regards the saltpetre detained at Ahmadabad, they took the opportunity of Shaista Khan's approaching departure to negotiate its release; an on their abating over, in the price of the tapestry received by Smyrne merchant, he allowed them to bring it to Surat to just before rains".[135] The purchase of further quantity by the

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[132] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1655-60, pp.15,121.

[133] Ibid., 1646-50, p.34.

[134] Ibid., 1651-54, p. 215.

[135] Ibid., 1655-60, p.15.

English was stopped until the arrival of Shaista Khan's successor, Murad Baksh, Viceroy at Ahmadabad. He allowed them to buy any quantity of saltpetre,"however an order came from the King's Diwan prohibiting them from buying or transporting any saltpetre from thence".[136] Sometimes the caravans or the boats bringing saltpetre were unnecessarily stopped unless the suitable bribe was given to the Mughal officials. The following letter would confirm the above statement: According to a letter by President Breton and Thomas Marry at Swally to Company, March 31,1647,"The saltpetre detained at Roy Bag(Patna) was later on released on giving a bribe of 500 pagodas to Mustuffa Khan and its acknowledgement was daily awaited by the English. The English started doubting whether it would be safe to make further investment there".[137]

The English again in 1645 paid a good deal of money as a bribe to release the 65 bales of saltpetre at Ray Bag.[138]

Saltpetre was a state monopoly of which a reference is to be found in a letter of the Surat factors dated March 15,1636 which ran as "Saltpetre is a prohibited commodity, and hath allwaies in all places paid some acknowledgement to the Governor of the place where it was bought".[139] Again, mentioning about the

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[136] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1655-60, p.121.

[137] Ibid., 1646-50, p.114.

[138] Ibid., p.63.

[139] Ibid. 1634-36 P. 182

monopoly exercised by the King, the Surat factors expressed fears for not getting the required commodity and wrote to the Company (October 20, 1655), that the King who had 'made it his commodity' had '10,000 double maunds of saltpetre, ores,refined, very full of salt, 'costing 67 or 68 rupees a maund, lying ready at Ahmadabad, and that so long as any of this quantity was unsold, the English would not be allowed to purchase any saltpetre 'in kingdome'; or to procure the stipulated amounts from the saltpetre manufactures.[140]

Anthony Smith at Ahmadabad suffered much trouble in the hands of Diwan 'Rymutt Ckawne' (Rahamat Khan) who was an agent of the King, he could not enforce the monopoly by compelling the English or the Dutch to take King's saltpetre.[141]

Unauthorised purchase and transport of saltpetre by the English or the Dutch was also forbidden by the Mughal State. In March 1628, the Agra factors wrote to Surat that both the English and the Dutch were completely banned by the king 'for buying and transporting saltpetre without his authority', that two English factors, Gregory Clemant and John Bangham were imprisoned for a day and a night in the Agra castle and after much interrogation the king gave them licence.[142] Again in 1646, the Caravan, carrying

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[140] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1655-60,p.15.

[141] Ibid.,1624-29,p.230.

[142] Ibid.,pp.270-208,30.

saltpetre was detained.[143] In 1654, Shahjahan's Diwan by the orders of the King disallowed the English from making any purchase or sale of this commodity.[144] Similarly, in December 1655, the 'release' of the caravan was made by the English by much persuation from Diwan Rahmat Khan.[145]

Shaista Khan, as Governor of Bengal, tried to monopolise the commodity, when t he learnt its importance and the keen rivalry of the Dutch and the English for its purchase' and decided further to sell them (Dutch and English) at his own rates' as he knew that their ships would not 'go empty from the Bay'. In 1664, he sent his agents for 'preventing the English and Dutch from advancing any money to the manufactures for the purchase of 'saltpetre'. The English found Shaista Khan as most 'tyrannical and coveteous',who would not hesitate in using his good offices for securing or obtaining bribe from the Europeans, especially the English.[146]

Monopolies of saltpetre existed in the Golconda and Bijapur States too. The letters of the Masulipatam factors to Bengal dated July 16, 1666 and September 1666 noted that due to Aurangzeb's wars with Golconda King, the latter had monopolised all available saltpetre from the producers, including a large part

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[143] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1646-50, pp.57-59.

[144] Ibid., 1651-54,pp.299-300.

[145] Ibid., 1655-60,pp.17-18.

[146] Ibid., 1661-68,pp.394-97.

of what the English factors were promised by the 'brokers' to get.[147] Similarly, the King of Bijapur also exercised his right to monopolise the saltpetre sale and 'would be given to that 'contractor', 'who paid maximum amount'.[148]

According to Thomas Bowery, the Dutch had erected a factory in Bengal for getting saltpetre and there was a good competition between the Dutch and English for the purchase of it.[149]

About the English trade in saltpetre, Bowery remarked that 'All the saltpetre is sent hence to Hughly in great flatt bottomed vessels, of an exceedings strength,which are called patellas: each of them will bringe downe 45,600 Bengale maunds'.[150]

"Many patellas came downe yearly laden with wheat and other graine, and goe up laden with salte and bees wax, the kings onely commodity".[151]

In Bihar, Patna was another important place where the English and Dutch had erected their Factories for the 'procurement of saltpetre. For the purchase of saltpetre, money was given in advance prior to the season.

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147 William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1665-____, pp.245-243.

148 Ibid., 1655-60,p.375n.

149 R.C.Temple,(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, Hakluyt Society, London, 1905, p.225.

150 Ibid., p.22.

151 Ibid., p. 228.

Agent Greenhill, followed up the method deployed by the Dutch to fetch saltpetre and "sail up the river in boats to Patna for saltpetre which is said to cost half so much at Pattana as at Balasore". For this purpose, a boat was purchased at Masulipatam for 120 pagodas as the hired boats proved more expensive, was christened as 'transport' and sent to Hugli under William Bevis.[152]

John Marshall, who visited Patna in 1676, has given a good account of the manner of the purchase of saltpetre. According to him, the English contacted the saltpetre men whose number varied from 30 to 40. The English deputed its peons to keep a close watch over 'Petermen as they may not sell its saltpetre to Dutch when ready'. Jobcharnock, the Chief of the English at Patna had strictly instructed his company men not to enter into any engagement or deal with the Dutch regarding the sale or purchase of saltpetre. The Nawab had also large stores of saltpetre at Patna and occasionally he would force the saltpetre men (English)to sell the saltpetre directly to him and would even conduct raids at times on the English storehouse at Naunagar,if it was nowhere available. The Nawab not only tried to monopolise the saltpetre but also 'lead' and lately getting large quantities of it from English.[153]

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[152] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1651-54, January 14,1651, Agent Greenhill to the Company.

[153] At the end of the Diary of Streynsham Master, there is an account of Patna by John Marshall, December 10,1676,R.C.Temple, (ed.), Diaries of Streynsham Master,John Murray,London,1911, Vol.II,pp.331-332.

Thomas Bowery remarked about the availability of saltpetre in Patna by saying that 'the only commodities of this kingdome that are yearly sent for England are saltpetre, of which great quantities are sent to England and Holland with a considerable investment of each nation in Codds Muske which is here found to be very good. It is in general taken from a small decree of about 2 foot high of which this country both migntilie abound.'[154]

James Bridgman at Balasore informed the Company in December 15, 1650 that saltpetre at Patna was in plenty and did not cost more than one rupee a maund, though the total cost including customs and freight at Hugli did not exceed than 1¼ rupees. The English had purchased a large quantity of saltpetre which was to be sent to England in Lionesa. They(the English) were keen on getting the entire stock then available at Patna and were ready to 'pay any amount desired by the sellers'.[155]

George Tash, Hugh Penn and Anthony Smith at Ahmadabad wrote to the President at Surat that Malpore was also an important centre of saltpetre production and took precedence over Ahmadabad or Patna as the European traders and particularly the English and Dutch were found vying with each other for its monopoly. On 27th August, 1647, the English factors complained that half of the

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154 R.C.Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, pp.229-30.

155 William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1646-50, p.337.

saltpetre sent from Malpore was seized by the governor at Surat. This has been done inspite of the fact that the governor had publically given them permission to buy 5,000 maunds of saltpetre. The Governor had also taken a bribe of Rs.280 from the English.[156] The Dutch also did not lag behind as they also purchased independently 700 maunds of saltpetre at Malpore.[157] President Breton and Messers Merry Blackman, Pearce and Oxenden at Swally marine informed that Saltpetre which was brought at Ahmadabad did not prove good in quality. They, therefore, decided to continue buying from Malpore in its raw form and refine it in the Ahmadabad factory.[158] Again, the English resuming the former practice of buying saltpetre at Malpore having obtained permission from the Governor of Ahmadabad to purchase 6,000 maunds.[159]

On March 13,1647, we find that an incessant rivalry was going on at Malpore between the English and the Dutch for the monopoly of the saltpetre and because of that they had strained their relations. The English, however, with the connivance of the Mughal Governor were successful in getting contracts for

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156 William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India.1646-50, p.150.

157 Ibid., p. 155.

158 Ibid., p. 255.

159 President Breton and Messrs Merry, Knipe and Tash at Swally Marine to the Company on January 6,1646, Ibid.,pp.187,79.

1,500 great maunds of saltpetre at Malpore at the rate of 22 rupees a maund which was 1/8 rupees dearer. This increase was due to the high cost of transport and water scarcity due to draught.[160] On January 25,1647, a ship Dolphin was despatched to England, carrying 9 bales of saltpetre.[161]

Another important centre of production of saltpetre in Gujrat was Ahmadabad. In 1646, the President informed the Company that the 'best saltpetre came from Ahmadabad and was refined in their factory at Ahmadabad. The President further informed that the 'purchase of saltpetre' in its raw form was more economical. The English refined it in their 'own factory and packed it in raw hides according to the usual method in 'order to prevent the loss in storage'.[162]

The first 'caravan of saltpetre was despatched by the English, according to Joseph Hokinson in 1625 and carried a rich load of 2,870 maunds of saltpetre from Ahmadabad.[163]

The second caravan was found carrying 1,200 maunds of saltpetre. The caravans sometimes were attacked by robbers so an armed guard always accompanied the caravan. President Breton and

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[160] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1646-50, p.112. George Tash and Anthony Smith to the President and Council at Surat on March 13,1647, Ibid., p.273.

[161] Ibid.,p.79.

[162] Ibid., p.14.

[163] Ibid., 1624-29,p.275.

Messrs. Merry Blackman informed the Company on January 31,1649 that saltpetre obtained from Agra was of fine quality, and they therefore, decided to continue the purchases from Malpore(raw) and refined it at Ahmadabad due to economy reasons.[164]

Thus, the English and the Dutch were carrying on a profitable trade of saltpetre and the Dutch were exporting ten times as much. By 1651, the private English merchants had, however, imported such large quantities that after satisfying the need of their government, they had exported much to France, Sweden, Holland and Italy.

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[164] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1646-50, p.255.

CHAPTER VII

PRINCIPAL EXPORTS : SILK AND TEXTILES

There is no mention of the silk trade by the early reports sent by the English factors from Surat. Sir Thomas Roe was specially assigned the important task of opening up new centres for the silk trade in Persia and Bengal. About opening a factory at Bengal, Roe was not very enthusiastic as he felt, 'the silke of Bengala... in my opinion is had cheeper of Agra than you will find it there, to maynteyne a factory for it, being this people travell and live hardlier then yours can".[1]

In 1621, Robert Hughes and John Parker were sent to Patna to judge the prospects of extending their trade operations and to erect a factory there. At Patna they found a large quantity of Bengal silk being procurable there. They purchased silk,

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[1] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. IV, Sampson Low & Co., London, 1900, p.250.

silk stuffs and several other commodities which were sent from Agra to Surat and from there despatched to England. But the Company did not approve this as it found the 'proposition' not very advantageous since the cost came much more what 'they had expected'.[2] Attempts were made again to procure it through Masulipatam but it was soon abondoned due to 'excessive difficulties in the way'.[3] Thus, ended the first attempt of the English to establish at Patna.[4] But however, Hughes discovered that any quantity of silk could be purchased at Patna, though it required great labour 'for converting it to English use'. The silk came there in cocoons (unwound). As silk could be purchased only through Kotwal, the agent of the Governor, who held a monopoly in this, Hughes decided to wind off the silk from cocoons himself as it was to prove much cheapter than the other one. As a result of his hard labours, he was able to produce seven qualities of silk thread from one seer of cocoon silk. A seer had a weight of 34½ pice which was 1/64th part of a rupee. The pice weighed half an ounce; hence the seer was 17½ ounces or a little over a pound. He gave three of these qualities, the local names. The names were Shikasta,meaning broken,irregular and Katwai,which was imperfect,

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[2]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21,Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1911,pp.xxiii-xxiv, Introduction.

[3]Ibid., p.xxiv.

[4]Ibid.

discoloured.[5] The usual length of local skeins was a coved of 33½ to 40 inches, though Hughes made it a yard for the purpose of English market. Hughes found that as in the case of cotton, the system of dealing in silk was complicated. One great difficulty was regarding the variation of the weight of seer which ranged from 30 to 33½ and 34½ pice. Much had to be given by way of discount to Governor, for brokers for settling accounts.[6] Ten years later, another attempt was made to open trade with Bengal, but this time too,"the enterprise fayled of its expected success".[7]

Bengal in the 17th century was most astonishing example of the silk production both raw and tassar.[8] The East India Company wrote to Bengal factors to furnish them with raw silk. They had sent from England the skeins of a particular specimen for this purpose. Sometimes the Bengal raw silk was termed as Pigtail.[9] Satgaon near Hugli produced silk in the form of quilts. Hughes lined these with tafta silk or tassar which

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[5]Richard Carnac Temple (ed.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Hakluyt Society, London,1907,Vol.II,pp.371-372.

[6]Richard Carnac Temple in Appendix D entitled as the First English Commercial Mission to Patna, Ibid., p.372.

[7]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1630-33, pp.182,198,203.

[8]Ibid., 1624-29, p. 25.

[9]Ibid., 1618-21,pp.56-58.

was silk mixed with cotton, and "gave them silk fringes and tassels for the Englisy market". He also encouraged purchase of alachas from Baikuntpur. These were silk goods 5½ yards long and 27 inches wide and were found very suitable for petticoats of the Persian and English ladies.[10]

The silk was prepared from silk worms which were fed on mulberry trees. It was also prepared from Muga or monga worms.[11]

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[10] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, pp.360-73.

[11] Richard Carnac Temple,(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol.II, John Murray, London,1911, p. 136.
According to George Watt, the terms Mulberry and non-mulberry feeding are more accurate than domesticated and wild, since certain of the so called wild insects have existed for centuries both in India and China. All the silk worms that live on the mulberry are not necessarily domesticated. In India,the mulberry has been systematically reared for many centuries., George Watt, Commercial Products of India being an Abridgement of Dictionary of the Economic Products of India, John Murray, London, 1908, pp.992-993.
Munga Silk - This is the Muga(Munga) silk worm of Assam,a name said to have been originally given because of the Amber colour of the fibre and hence frequently used to denote any wild silk. Thus, eri Muga, Tassar Muga and Katkarimuga. Ibid., p.1009.
Tavernier has also given an account of the Munga silk of Assam. "He says, there is a kind of silk which is produced on the trees, and is made by an animal having the form of our silkwo silkworm,but it is rounder and remains for a whole years on the trees.The stuffs which are made of this silk are very brilliant, but soon fray and do not last long", V.Ball,Jean Baptiste, Tavernier's Travels in India,Macmillan,London,1889,Vol.II,p.281.
According to Temple, Moga silk was another variety,prepared from Muga or Munga, a 'wild silkworm'. This variety was manufactured in Bengal (Qasim Bazar) and Assam. It was a strong, coarse silk cloth, Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, p. 299n.

Bernier remarked about the Bengal silk, "one would not imagine the quantity (of silks and silk stuffs) that is hence(Bengal) transported every year, for this country furnishes generally all this great empire of Mongol as far as Lahore and Cabul, and most of the other forain parts, whither cotton-cloth is carried... The Hollanders alone have sometimes seven hundred or eight hundred men of the natives at work in their factory at Kassem Bazar as the English and other merchants have theirs in proportion".[12]

According to the estimate of Mandelslo, "they drive here(Bengal) a great trade in... silks which are esteemed to best in all the indies".[13] Bengal 'tassar' was known to the company's merchants in 1619.[14]

According to Temple, Streynsham Master, the Chief Agent of the Company in 'the Bay' and the coast (1676-80) rendered a great service by introducing tassar silk, a trade that has lasted on to the present day in several forms of cheap silks. This type of silk was known by the various names in Master's time, arindi silk worms fed on castor oil plant 'tester' and 'herba'.[15]

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[12] Archibald Constable(tr.), Francois Bernier's Travels in the Mughal Empire, 3rd ed., S.Chand & Co.Delhi, 1972,pp.439-440. (Reprint).

[13] M.S.Commissariat,(tr.), John Mandelslo's Travels in Western India, Oxford University Press, London,1931,p.94.

[14] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21, pp.112,116.

[15] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I., p.137.

The tasar silk of Bengal was made of half cotton and half silk was about 14 yards long and 1½ yards in width and was available at Patna.[16] In Bengal, a small village of Kasim bazar was a notable example of silk production of 17th century. It played a 'key role' in the production of silk in India and the English mainly relied upon it. The English factory at Kasimbazar was established in 1658 with John Ken as its chief.[17]

Most of the raw silk produced at Kasimbazar was sent to Gujrat where it was further used for manufacturing various items like carpets, satins and taffetas. Tavernier remarked, "all these silks 'from Kasimbazar are brought to the Kingdom of Gujrat, and the greater part came to Ahmadabad and Surat, where they are woven in fabrics. Firstly, carpets of silk and gold, others of silk, gold and silver and others altogether of silk are made in Surat. In the second place, satins with bands of gold and silver, and others with hands of different colours and others all uniform are made there, and it is the same with the taffetas. Thirdly, patoles, which are stuffs of silk very soft, decorated all over with flowers of different colours, are manufactured at Ahmadabad".[18]

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[16] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India, 1618-21, p.198.

[17] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, Hakluyt Society, 1905, p. 213n.

[18] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier Travels in India, Vol.II, pp. 2-3.

Arindi was another variety, spun by the Arindi silk worm, so named because it feeds chiefly on castor oil plant, called arindi in Bengal.[19] At a consultation held at Kasimbazar on December 1, 1679, the Council ordered that a bale of arindi, 'a new sort of cloth, neither silk nor cotton', be purchased and packed upto, be sent to England.[20]

The Agent of the Company at Masulipatam had got some pieces of arindi silk to be dyed into several colours for transportation to England for purposes of trial towards the end of 1679.[21]

At a consultation held at Hugli on December 13,1679, it was decided to order 600 pieces of arindi cloth and 400 bales of arindi yarn to be sent to England in 1680. Out of this quantity, 400 pieces of the cloth were to be 15 yards long and one yard broad, and 200 pieces were to be made of double twisted thread for sail cloth, 15 yards long and ½ yard long and ½ yard broad.[22] In January 1681, the Court of Committees of the Company, ordered the provision 'at the Bay' of 1,000 pieces of blue arindi cloth, 16 yards long and 1 1/8 yards broad.[23]

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[19] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, p. 299n.

[20] Ibid., p. 312.

[21] Ibid., p.300.

[22] Ibid.,pp.399-400.

[23] Ibid., p. 348.

Taftas

It was from the Persian word taftan meaning 'to spin' or woven. In the Ain-i-Akbari, it comes in the list of silks.[24] Taftas were something like 'striped stuffs of so silk and cotton'. Tavernier found the taftas made from silken clothes.[25] He cautioned the buyer that before buying the tafta silks one should see "whether they have a uniform fineness, and next to unfold some of them to see if they contain any foreign substance to increase the weight, after which, each piece should be weighed separately in order to ascertain whether it of proper weight".[26] Taftas were made in Hugli and Kasimbazar, which were considered to be the renowned centres of their manufacture. Taftas, supplied from Kasimbazar to the Company were fine, simple and unbleached or brown. The English merchants sent for the local weavers and those from neighbourhood whenever they required the cloth and advanced them the required amount of money. The three varieties of silk were brought by the weavers in 3 or 4 months time to the English factory where every piece brought in by weavers was weighed and measured and the chief of the English factory made entries into the 'weavers vast booke' kept by him. The price of each piece was fixed after taking into account the fineness,

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[24] H.Blochmann(tr.), Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.I,Aadish Book Depot, Delhi,1965,pp.99-100 (Reprint).

[25] W.Ball(tr.), Jean Bastiste, Tavernier's Travels in India,Vol.II, p.3.

[26] Ibid., pp.26-27.

weight and evenness of each piece.[27] Taftas were exported from Bengal to England for they were either sold or were given in presents to some important persons.[28] In the year 1658, the English invested Rs.50,000 in taftas alone. Every year the English invested £ 4,000 for the purchase of raw silk, taftas and cotton yarn.[29]

In March 1659, long taftas were costing from Rs.4.50 to Rs. 4.75 a piece in Kasimbazar and the short ones at Rs.17 to Rs.18 per score of pieces. Silk, ready would cost Rs.3.75 per seer.[30] Brocade was a silk stuff which was diversified in colour marked with irregular patches of different colours and was further decorated with gold and silver. The term was also applied to other stuffs which were made in the similar fashions. The Portuguese too invested a good among money in purchasing brocade silk.[31] "In 1676, the Court ordered from the Bay,31,000 pieces of taffatas so as they of good black colours and whites according to our former advices".[32]

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[27]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol.II, pp. 9-10.

[28]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1655-60, p.188.

[29]Ibid., p.275.

[30]Ibid., p. 296.

[31]Ibid., p.275.

[32]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p. 23.

Silk Manufactures of Gujrat

The manufacture of velvet, embroidered with gold or silver in the royal factories (Kaskhanas) at Ahmadabad was of considerable significance. As already mentioned the other varieties of silk fabrics manufactured in Gujrat were mainly carpets, satins and taffatas. Raw silk mostly came from Kasim-bazar to Gujrat. According to Tavernier, this raw silk at Gujrat was woven into fine fabrics and later on 'converted into fine pieces of cloths.' [33]

German itinerant Mandelslo, who visited Ahmadabad in 1638 writes, "There is not in a manner any nation, not any merchandize in all Asia which may not be had at Ahmadabad". About the abundance of silk goods, produced at Ahmadabad, he says that the artisans ordinarily made use of silk from China which was very fine and mingled it with that of Bengal, which was not very fine, yet better than Persia and much cheaper. He also made a mention of gold and silver brocades made there in the city besides satins and velvets of various colours, and carpets on ground of silk or yarn.[34]

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[33] V.Ball, (tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol. II, p.3

[34] M.S.Commissariat,(tr.), Mandelslo's Travels in Western India, Oxford University Press, London, 1931, p. 31.

In 1666, Thevenot visited several cities of Gujrat and gave an exact description of various silk products like satins, velvets, taffetas and tapestries with gold, silk and woolen grounds and other stuffs.[35]

Manucci the famous author of 'Storia do Magor' a Physician and traveller has also testified the abundance of silken stuffs being available at Gujrat. According to him in this province (Ahmadabad) there is made a progidious quantity of gold and silver work, and a quantity of jewellery set with stones.[36] Abul Fazl has enumerated thirty three qualities of silk. The silken stuffs mentioned in the Ain-i-Akbari are as under:

Item	Price
Velvet from Europe, per yard	1 to 4 M
Velvet from Kashan, per piece	2 to 7 M
Velvet from Yazd (Persia)	2 to 4 M
Velvet from Mashhad per piece	2 to 4 M
Velvet from Hirat per piece	1½ to 3 M
Velvet from Khafi per piece	2 to 4 M
Velvet from Lahore, per piece	2 to 4 M
Velvet from Gujrat per yard	1 to 2 R
Qatifa - Yi2 Purabi (a kind of velvet)	1 to 1½ R
Taja-baf per piece	2 to 30 M
Dara-i-baf per piece	2 to 30 M
Mutabbaq per piece	1 to 30 M
Shirwani per piece	1½ to 10 M
Milak per piece	1 to 7 M
Kamkhab per piece	1 to 5 M
Twar per piece	2R to 2 M
Khuri, per piece	4 to 10 R
Mushajjar, from Europe per yard	2R to 1 M

(Contd...)

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[35] Surendra Nath Sen, Indian Travels of Thevenot and Carari, National Archives of India, New Delhi, 1949, pp. 96, 275.

[36] William Irvine(tr.), Niccolao Manucci's Storia do Mogor, John Murray, London, 1907, Vol. II, p. 425.

Velvet from Yezd, per piece	1 to 2 M
Satin from Europe, per yard	3 R to 1 M
Satin from Hirat per piece	5 R to 2 M
Khara per yard	1 R to 6 R
Sihrang per piece	1 to 3 M
Qutini per piece	1½ R to 2 M
Katan from Europe 37	¼ to 2 R
Tafta from Europe	4 D to ½ R
Anbari from Europe	1/5 R to 2 R
Darai from Europe	1/5 R to 2 R
Sitipuri per piece	6 R to 2 M
Qababand per piece	6 R to 2 M
Tat Bandpuri per piece	2 R to 1½ M
Lah per yard	1/3 to 1/7 R
Misri per yard	½ to 1 M
Sar per yard	1/10 to 1/5 R
Tassar per piece	1/3 to 2 R
Plain Kurtawar Satin yer yard	½ to 1 R
Kapurmur	1/8 to 1 R
Alacha	1/5 to 2 R
Tafsila, per piece	7 to 12 R. 38

When Streynsham Master visited the English factory at Kasimbazar in 1678, he found the building most unsafe for the 'weavers and throwsters', as it could catch fire any time and 'it was therefore, resolved to erect a brick room inside the factory by the orders of the Agent Streynsham Master'.[39] Kens has given a detailed account of silk of Bengal in 1661.

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[37] Katan: Generally translated by linen. It is exceedingly thin, so much so that it tears when moon shineson it. It is Muslin, H.Blochman,(tr.), Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari,Vol.I.,p.100n.

[38] Ibid., pp. 99-100.

[39] Richard Carnac Temple,(ed.), Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol.II, p. 306.

According to him silk was wound into three types, known as the 'head', 'belly' and 'foot'. The English used to get the first two sorts, generally in the proportion of 5:4. This type of silk was called by the name of 'Putta' or short skin. The second kind of silk was known as 'Puttany'. It was the superfine sort of short skein and was usually priced from Rs.5¼ to 6¼ per seer. There, a third kind called as 'Dolleria' - a name given where all the three varieties, head, belly and foot were all mixed.[40]

The annual consumption of silk raised from 580 bales to 1,000 bales in 1679. The total amount of the various sorts of silks for seven years is as follows:

Head and belly	4200 to 4300 bales
White silk	890 to 900 bales
Floretta	540 to 590 nales
Total in 7 years	5,630 to 5,790 bales.[41]

Silk trade was such a tremendous source of profit to the Company and in 1681, the Company had to ban all Englishmen from dealing in raw silk because it was felt that the hike in prices of silk was mainly due to this fact that it had further reduced the Company's investments in India.[42] Thus, silk trade was of tremendous help to the English East India Company in India.

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[40] Balkrishna, Commercial Relations Between India and England, Routledge, London, 1924, p. 143.

[41] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p. 306.

[42] Balkrishna, Commercial Relations Between India and England, p. 143.

Textiles

Indian textiles had become very popular by the beginning of the 17th century and captured markets in Asia and Europe. There was a competition among the various nations of Europe for the monopoly of Indian trade especially textiles, the most important item of trade. Among the Europeans, the English in particular encountered a tough opposition from the Portuguese and Dutch.[43]

In 1609, Finch had sent a list of types of cloth available in Western India for the Europeans or Leventine markets. He informed that the fine white fabrics known as 'Saffibaf' and pinta does (painted cloth) of Gujrat would capture good markets there. The 'Serribaf' could be exported to the Barbary states or Levant as the moors made their 'Cabayas' from this cloth while the latter might prove useful at home for making fine quilts and also serve as hangings. Besides,Finch also named 'Semijanes', Dhootie,Byramy, linen, calicoes,both read and blue, quilts, baftas made at Broach and navsari(a day's journey from Surat).[44]

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[43] Frederick Charles Danvers,(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East,Vol.I, Sampson Low & Co., 1896, p.28.

[44] Ibid., pp. 28-29. "The serribaf should be of 18 to 19 covad in length and about a yard broad", Ibid.,

The Ain-i-Akbari has mentioned about 30 types of cotton cloths manufactured in India at the end of 16th century. Ain-i-Akbari makes a mention of the cotton products of Khandesh, known as Sirisaf, Bhiraum coming from Dharangaon, Gujrat, manufacturing an excellent variety of cloth worked with gold threads, fotah (a partly coloured cloth used for turbans), jamawar(a kind of flowered woollen stuff well known as Khara). Khara velvets and brocades were artistically manufactured there.[45] The Ain-i-Akbari was given a list of cotton goods and their prices as follows:

Items	Prices
Khasa, per piece	3 R to 15 M
Chautar per piece	2 R to 9 M
Malmal per piece	4 R
Tansukh per piece	4 R to 5 M
Siri Saf per piece	2 R to 5 M
Gangajal per piece	4 R to 5 M
Bhiraun per piece	4 R to 4 M
Sahan per piece	1 to 3 M
Jhona per piece	1 R to 1 M
Atan per piece	2½ R to 1 M
Asawali per piece	1 to 5 M
Bafta per piece	1½ R to 5 M
Mahmudi per piece	½ to 3 M
Panchtoliya per piece	1 to 3 M
Jhola per piece	½ to 2½ M
Salu per piece	3 R to 2 M
Doriva per piece	6 R to 2 M
Bahadur Shahi per piece	6 R to 2 M
Garha Suti per piece	1½ to 2 M

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[45] H.S.Jarret (tr.), Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. II, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1891, p.247.

Shela, from Dekkan per piece	½ to 2 M
Mihrkul per piece	3 R to 2 M
Mindil per piece	½ to 2 M
Sarband per piece	½ to 2 M
Dupatta per piece	1 R to 1 M
Katancha per piece	1 R to 1 M
Fota per piece	½ to 6 R
Goshpech per piece	1 to 2 R
Chhint per yard	2 D to 1 R
Gazina per yard	½ to 1½ R
Silahati per yard	2 to 4 D 46

Infact, Indians produced many more variety of cloth what Abul Fazl has mentioned and it was roughly seven times more.

Manrique records, "the finest and the richest muslins are pr produced in this country from 50 to 60 yards long and seven to eight hand, breadth wide, with borders of gold and silver or coloured silks. So fine are indeed these muslins that merchants place them in a hollow habus, about two spans long and thus secured, carry them throughout Khorasan, Persia and Turkey and many other countries.[47]

Thomas Roe wrote from Mandu to the English factors at Agra that they could barter with Persia for the Samana cloth, Bengal silks, Chintz or for any sort of 'mercantable goods'. In his view such trade would be much profitable.[48]

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[46] H.Blochmann(tr.), Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.I, pp.100-101. Some of the names of cloth mentioned by Abul Fazl were later on gone out of use.

[47] H.Hosten,(ed.), Travels of Fray Sebastion Manrique,Hakluyt Society, Oxford, 1927, Vol. II, pp.56-57.

[48] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East,Vol. VI, pp. 105-106.

Bernier was amazed at the vast quantity of cotton cloths of all sorts, fine and others, tinged and white,W "which the Hollanders have draw thence and transport into many places, especially into Japan and Europe, not to mention what the English, Portugual and Indian merchants carry them from these parts".[49]

The various places of mamufacture and exports of these textiles were Ahmadabad, Cambay, Baroda, Surat,Broach in Gujrat, Burhanpur in Khandesh, Samana and Lahore in Punjab, Patna in Bihar, Dacca, Malda and Kasimbazar in Bengal, Armagaon, St. Thome, Masulipatam on the Coromandel coast."

Production of Gujrat

The province of Gujrat was well known for 'cotton trade' or in textiles(Calicoes as they styled in Europe. The ordinary cotton fabrics were known as Baftas.[50] According to Alexander Hamilton, "The Broach baftas are famous throughout all India, the country producing the best cotton in the world".[51]

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[49]Archibald Constable(tr.), Francois Berniers Travels in the Mughal Empire, p. 439.

[50]Bafta, "a kind of calico made specially at Broach,from the Persian word (Bafta) woven and is still in use in Gujrat", Henry Yule and A.C.Burnell,(eds.), Hobson-Jobson, A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Pharses, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1968, p. 47.

[51]William Foster(ed.), A New Account of the East India, being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, London, 1930,

The Gujrat calicoes were obtained bleached,unbleached or dyed in various colours and were produced with special excellance at Broach, Navsari and Baroda. According to Tavernier,"in this place there is made of quantity of baftas or pieces of long and narrow calico, these are very beautiful and closely woven cloths, and prices of them ranges from 4 upto 100 rupees. Custom dues have to paid at Broach on all goods whether imported or exported".[52] He also remarked, stating the importance of the river Narbada at Broach. It (Narbada) was well known for its bleaching qualities for the calicoes. These were brought to Broach from the various parts of the country like Agra, Lahore and Bengal for bleaching. The large number of lemons were available in Broach and Navsari.[53]

A letter written by the President of the Surat factory to the company at the end of 1639, says that for the bleaching process, "that town(Broach) yet retains its wanted perfection and has the preference before all other places although the ancient making of calicoes be somewhat adultrated".[54]

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[52] V.Ball,(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.I, p. 66.

[53] Ibid.

[54] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1637-41, p. 196.

Besides the white variety, baftas could be obtained coloured in red, blue or black. Here again, the cities of Ahmadabad and Agra became the chief centres to which calicoes from all parts of India were brought to bed dyed by means of the Indigo which was manufactured at Sarkhej and Biana respectively. We have some definite information from the factory records that in 1647, the English factors at Ahmadabad set up their own dyeing house in the city as they were highly 'dissatisfied with the natives way of dyeing', as they would dye in very shabby manner and the results were very poor. Another ran as:"Heartily glade we are, they write, that we shall have no further occasion of trouble to the Sarkhej dyers or to be troubled with them, whose former ill-usage first put us upon this move to provident course to their great hinderance".[55]

Tavernier, among other writers bears eloquent testimony to the surprising beauty and texture of the muslins that the handloom weavers in India could produce, though the testimony does not make any reference to a particular place. According to him "In my time, he says, I have seen two pieces of them(baftas) sold for each which 1000 mahmudis (£37) were paid. The English bought one and the Dutch the other, and they were each of twenty eight cubit. Mahammad Ali Beg, when returning to Persia from his

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[55]William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1646-50, pp. 59, 127.

Embassay to India, presented Cha Safi II, with a cocoanut of the size of an ostrich's egg, enriched with precious stones, and when it was opened a turban was drawn from it 60 cobits in length and of a muslin so fine that you could scarcely know what it was that you had in your hand".[56]

According to Tavernier again, "both spun and unspun cotton came from the provinces of Burhanpur and Gujrat. The unspun cottons do not go to Europe, being too bulky and too small value, and they are only exported to the Red Sea 'Hormuz', 'Bassora' and sometimes to the islands of 'Sonde' and to the Phillippines. "As for the spun cottons, the English and Dutch companies export large quantities to Europe, but they are not of the finest qualities; of the kinds which they send the maund weight is worth from 15 to 50 mahmudis. These are the kinds which are used to make the wicks of candles, and stockings and to mingle with the web of silken stuffs. As for the finest qualities, they are of no use in Europe".[57]

In a letter written from Surat by Thomas Aldworth, William Bidulp and Nicholas Withington to the Company on January 25,1612, it was suggested: "As for the commodities of this country, viz., indigoes,calicoes,cotton yarn,and divers other commodities, will by our computation yield three for one at home atleast".[58]

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[56] Shah Safvi II, Tavernier describes him in the Persian Travels, Paris Edition, 1676, p. 524.; V.Ball,(tr.),Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.II, p.7.

[57] Ibid., p.8.

[58] Frederick Charles Danvers(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East,Vol. I,p.238.

Narrow and broad calicos from Navsari and Gandavi were very much in demand in England. They yielded a good profit, especially the Navsari linens. Navasari was situated on the Pure river, 16 miles south of Surat, and Gandavi is now in the Baroda territory.[59]

From Broach, the following variety of cloth was 'despatched' to England, on December 1614 to Achin, Priaman and Bantam.

For England

2000 pieces white baftas at 2 s 6d per piece
2000 pieces white baftas at 3s a piece
2000 pieces white baftas at 4s a piece
2000 pieces light blue colour at 2s 9d per piece
2000 pounds in flat and round indigo.
100 pounds in cotton yarn of several sort.

For Bantam

100 corge of baftas meale at 55s per corge.
50 corge of byrams neal at 60 s per corge.
200 corge of candikam at 30s per corge
50 corge of candiveens at 25s per corge
20 corge of trekens at 20s per corge
15 corge white baftas from 12 4o 16 s per piece.[60]

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[59] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. VI, p. 166.

[60] William Foster(ed.), The Voyage of Nicholas Downton to ehe East Indies, Hakluyt Society, London, 1939, p. 102

Prices of various cloth goods mentioned by Dodsworth in 1614:

Commodity	Price	Total Price
Indigo 1100 churles	-	11000 (1)
4000 pieces of baftas	3s per piece	600 (1)
2000 pieces of baftas	4s per piece	400 (1)
2000 pieces of Samianoes	6s per piece	600 (1)
2000 pieces of Samianoes	8s per piece	800 (1)
1000 pieces of coloured	18s per piece	075 (1)
250 pieces of shashes	5s	62-10
100 pieces shashes	8s per piece	40-00
75 pieces shashes	10s per piece	37-10
50 pieces shashes	15s per piece	37-10
25 pieces shashes	20s per piece	25-00(61)

"The lenghh of the baftas at Broach were to be 20½ covedas whereof 20 pieces would make a corge other type was of 17½ covadas, were 24 made a corge.[62]

By 1614, however, the company had resolved to order greater quantities, for in theautumn of this year the factors at Broach had already purchased 12,500 pieces altogether and invested some £ 2,800 in calicoes and even this quantity fell short of what the company had expected to buy.[63] Afterwards,we see that the expansion in 'calico trade' was rather very quick as in 1619, over 26,000 pieces were sold in the auction and the shipment in the Royal Anne alone was more than 14,000 pieces.

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[61]William Foster,(ed.), The Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies, p.95.

[62]Ibid., p. 103.

[63]Ibid., p. 95.

In February 1620, the factors at Surat promised the company to provide 30,000 pieces while in 1619, 1,00,000 pieces and by 1625 reached 2,21,500 pieces. Three years later the shipments were over 900 bales, and in 1630, on eh the eve of Gujrat famine the sale had been considerably reduced and the effects of famine were terrible on the cotton industry of Gujrat. Between 1632 and 1638, the imports of calicoes fell considerably. Thus, we can safely assume that the expansion of 'cotton trade' between 1613 and 1630 was very rapid, though the rate of growth was not exactly uniform.[64]

The Surat factors wrote to the company in February,1618, that they would supply them some Pintado quilts from other places as they could not get any from Surat. Other kinds of cloth to be provided were Lahore carpets, Jajams, particoloured cloth,carpets, nicanies, striped calicoes for napkins, dhoties,which were to be dyed into watchets. They had ordered Samana cloth from Agra and had ordered 6,000 pieces of this cloth, for the next years shipment 100,000 broaf baftas and 5,000 dhoties were also ordered to be procured.[65]

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[64] Due to famine, cloth had become very expensive and had become almost a 'rare commodity', William Foster(ed.),The English Factories in India,1630-33,pp.164,178,179., The nature and effects (famine) have been discussed in the author's article'Textile Industry in 17th Century,Research Bulletin(Arts),P.U.,Vol.XV,No.2,Oct,1984, pp. 131-141.

[65] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21, pp.51, 58.

The following varieties of cloth were sent from Surat in the ship Royal Anne in February,1618 :

Name of the Cloth	Mahmudis
Baftas broad, 8 pieces	120.6
Broad taftas, 5,302 pieces	33,195.21
Baftas for tahlevapkers, 80 pieces	218.00
Rease, 275 pieces	1,150½
Carpets, 46	1,066½
Baftas narrows, 20 pieces	55.00
Calico quilts 4	202.00
Semianas,2330 pieces or Samane cloth	14,075.00
Sabum cloth, 50 pieces	431.00
Baftas broad, 1,000 pieces	6,777.24
Baftas narrow or walchetts 1 corge	160.29
Baftas of 2 broad, 1 piece	24.6
Necanies,21 corge 15 covids long and 1 5/12 broad	1,320.00
Eramees, 7 covids long and 1½ broad	177.16
Baftas coloured(599) pieces	3,584.22
Dhoties 24 scores	2,190.11
Baftas narrow,white 99 scores 17 pieces	9,950.31
Baftas 9½ yds and 1 1/12 broad	635.16
Dholka Dhoties or Dutties	
Dulcae, 16¾ yds long and $1\frac{7}{24}$ broad, 20 scores	1,291.30[66]

In October 1620, the varieties of cloth shipped to England from Surat included 12,000 pieces of broad baftas, 24,000 pieces of dhoties cloth, 60,000 pieces of narrow baftas besides samana calicoes and carpets.[67]

Baftas of extraordinary length and breadth were provided from Broach to the company.[68]

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[66] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21, p.61.

[67] Ibid., p. 197.

[68] Ibid., p. 294.

The consignment for November included 80,000 pieces of broad baftas, 5,000 pieces of nicanies, 16,000 pieces of dhoti cloth and 100 maunds of silk.[69]

In 1621, the Surat factors sent to England in the ship London, 80,000 broad baftas, 45,000 nicanis, 4,000 samanas, 16,000 dhoties and 1,000 maunds of silk.[70]

In August 1622, the Broach factors gave particulars of their investments in cloth for the export to England and Java. Among them the varieties included were narrow baftas; poplee, chokree, cappera, husaini, bucker, ginghams, dhoties, tricandis and sailas. Out of 28,138 pieces of coarse narrow baftas, 23,000 were for England.[71]

A letter from Swally (February 14, 1625) to the company, confirmed the supply to England of broad and narrow baftas, white, brown and blue dhoties, plain and striped sarassa for napkins; nicanis; samana calicoes and dimities. They also further confirmed the supply of white calico lawns, such as were fit for 'banding' etc., and sashes of all kinds, but at prices 15 or 20 per cent dearer than in the places at which they were made.[72]

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[69] William Foster, (ed.), The English Factories in India, 1618-21, p. 323.

[70] Ibid.,

[71] Ibid., p. 110.

[72] Ibid., p. 62.

Goods to be provided for England, 1625

Narrow baftas, 5,000 corge; broad baftas, 2,500 corge, Dutties Dulka, 2,500 corge, baftas dyed, watchett, 25 corge; special narrow baftas, 200 corge, seriahs, 200 corge, necanees 250 corge, dimitties 200 pieces, quesos cullered 500 poeces, third seels 300 pieces, semianoes 1,000 chuckree (See the 1618-21, p.93) calicoe lawnes, 4,000 pieces, ambertrees to the value of 10,000 Mahmudis, flat sarkhej indigo 1,334 bales; Round(Biana) indigo, 666 bales; gum lac 900 maunds; aloes Socotrina, 300 maunds; preserved ginger 30 maunds; quilts of cuttany(see 1618-21,Vol.I, p.10) , 40 blood stones, 5 baskets Lahore carpets 30. Total estimates cost 1,264,389 Mahmudis in addition to 300,000 Mahmudies for pepper.[73]

Varieties of Indian cloth like sashes, sursullas and Khashkhashis and even 'lower sorts of salus and guldars' were in great demand in England. In a letter of March 9, 1630, written by Surat factors, the company sent their demand for the following varieties of cloth for England: White calicoes, one lac or 1,20,000 pieces viz., 80,000 or 90,000 pieces of narrow baftas of Broach, Baroda and Surat, 30,000 of broad baftas of Broach and Baroda narrow baftas were to be mostly of cheaper sorts(of 2 or 2½ Mahmudis a piece); but 4,000 pieces to be in the price range of 2½ and 4 Mahmudis; 3,000 between 4 to 6 mahmudis, 3,000 from 6 to 12 mahmudis.[74]

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[73] William Foster,(ed.), The English Factories in India,1624-29, p. 100.

[74] Ibid., 1630-33, p.4.

Broad baftas were to be provided in the same proportion in the price range of (3 to 3½ mahmudis), the rest from 4 to 5 mahmudis; only 1,000 pieces to cost 5 to 8 mahmudis. They(factors) were instructed to take a meticulous care about narrow baftas. The cloth supplied a year before was found to be shorter than the usual length, being 13 and 13½ yards instead of 14 and 14½ yards. They were also narrower than the usual variety of the same cloth (although the Baroda baftas were always narrower than of Broach). They were advised not to send the narrow baftas of Ahmadabad as they were not good and wanting in breadth. They were to send 500 pieces of broad nicanies, either of Broach or Baroda. Of 'short stuffs' - with blue and white checks or striped, be they capperees, populees, hassares or chakeries, they were to send some variety for the time being 300 or 400 pieces of tafsils were to be sent. 400 or 500 pieces of 'keeses (Khasas) of blue and white works were to be despatched in the consignment. A sample consignment of 200 pieces of the 'fine white keeses', provided they be 'of the demitee wale, and not of the diaper works'.(Wale was an old English word for ridge of threads in a cloth). They asked them not to send any quantity of calico lawns or sashes,be they salus, guldars and khashkhashis. Nor were they to provide girdles,kerchiefs,neckcloths, and orhanis as those varieties were not in demand at that time.[75]

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[75]William Foster (ed.), The English Factories in India,1630-33, pp.8-9.

Difficulty of Procurement

Broach and Baroda Baftas

Wylde and Council informed the company that they(factors at Surat) did not send home 395 bales of cotton yarn knowing that t they would have a ready market there. To this, they added 205 bales provided there and this created discontentment among the merchants thereof. The President and Council felt therefore, that as a result of this, they could not make any purchases in Broach and at Baroda. "Upon the last investment in that place, the weavers grew into a mutiny, and combined amongst themselves not to bring any baftaes to our house untill we gave them in writing not to buy any more cotton yarne, nor have they to this day". They (merchants) warned the company that they should not expect such great quantities as required or sent them before, for except in this place, it is not to be had.[76]

Theft of Calicoes

It was a regularr feature of the English trade in India. In the above mentioned letter Wylde and Council informed the company that they had done their best to check the thefts committed from their bales of calicoes on their way to Surat.It was not an easy thing to detect the real offenders. The goods from Ahmadabad and Cambay usually changed carts at Broach and all at Surat or Rander from where they were transported to Swally marine. Till then the damage could not be done nor were the sailors free from suspicion, for even & Swally, sanoes bales had been opened and even

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[76]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1630-33,p.22.

stolen. But nothing much could be done about it as nobody was prepared to name the culprits.[77]

Three ships, Hart, Expedition and Hopewell arrived in England in the middle of January 1630. They had for their cargo many articles including cloth. The company wrote to the Surat President by way of complaint that they found a number of bales of calico had been ripped up and part of the contents 'abstracted by rags or lumps of earth'. Other goods were found damaged by water. Making their observation regarding the consignment, they wrote that the Baroda and Surat calicoes were dear and badly chosen and the Baroda cloth was a yard shorter than it used to be. The cloth from Broach was better as regards the price, but still too dear. The company asked them to be careful in future. They were hopeful that the varieties of cloth named as sashes or cloth for turbans, sursulla and khaskhasi would sell to profit and also the lower, sorts of salus and guldars. There was, however, no hope of profit from the more expensive kinds of the latter cloth. The orhnis, girdles, handkerchiefs and neckcloths were not vendible in England.[78]

The President and Council at Swally marine wrote to the company on April 13,1630, says that the calicoes sent from there for England that year and the previous were mostly the 'lower sortments' and were chiefly bought in Broach,Baroda and Surat.[79]

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[77] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1630-33, pp.23-24.

[78] Ibid., p.4.

[79] Ibid., p. 21.

Surat authorities urged the Broach factos in October 1630, to push on the investments there for the cloth to be provided for Bantam and England. They were asked to pay particular attention to the company's wishes as regards length and breadth of the cloth.[80] Again in October 1630, the English factors at Broach were in position to procure 12 or 13 scores of pieces of cloth inspite of the competition of the Dutch there.[81] They sent in November 1630 to Surat 2,118 fardles of calico and 60 jars of butter in carts. From Surat the authorities had sent carts to bring down the goods from Ahmadabad and Baroda.[82] On November 7, 1630, the President and Council at Surat again reminded the Broach factors about the purchase of cloth from there and lose no opportunity in this. They regretted the slackening of the supply of the calicoes.[83] About three weeks later 126 scores of pieces of blue baftas were purchased at Surat and hoped to make the number upto 200. This was to diminish the quantity to be bought at Broach.[84] Again a few days later, calicoes were purchased at the rate of 200 a day'which the rains,we hope will augment',informed the President of Surat to the Company.[85]

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[80] William Foster(ed.),The English Factories in India,1630-33,p.62.

[81] Ibid., p. 75

[82] Ibid., p. 91.

[83] Ibid., p. 95.

[84] Ibid., p. 114.

[85] Ibid.,pp. 158-159.

A caravan carrying 200 bales of cloth of meant for Perisa reached Swally marine from Ahmadabad with Broach and Baroda cloth in the beginning of Jamuary 1632. The Cambay caravan also reached Surat on January 20. It brought about 200 bales of cloth, mostly for Persia and the Southwards. Towards the end of 1630, the Surat factors ordered 20,000 or 30,000 additional pieces of white calcio as the scarcity of Sarkhej Indigo necessitated a reduction under that head. They had instructed their men not to buy any piece that was deficient in length or breadth. They were also asked to pay attention to the 'close making up of their broad and narrow baftas' and also to their packing in proper manner.[86] They (Surat factors) had also ordered some Ahmadabad dhotis and narrow baftas but with caution that 'by altering weavers loomes they procure long baftas to be of small breadth. With those of Broach and their dhoties to be 12 yards long and one full yard in breadth'.[87] At a consultation held at Surat on February 2, 1631, it was resolved"to send Thomas Thimbley having been trayned up in England as Lynned dreper" to Broach for the purchase of cotton goods for despatch to the Southern factors. John Yard was appointed his assistant.[88] The Surat President and Council informed the company that until they received furthe orders they would contimue with the purchase of narrow and broad

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[86]William Foster(ed.),The English Factories in India,1630-33, p.199.

[87]The Surat President and Council to the company, Ibid.,pp.124-125.

[88]Ibid., p. 282.

samianoes and surreas, copporecas,populees, and chakris. They assured them that so far as the supply of broad nicanies,thread tafsils,blue and white 'keeses'(Khasas) and also their cloths of finer sorts were concerned, 'you may expect to be furnished both for quantity, and quality, agreeing with your directions. They were however,instructed not to go for the purchase of calico lawns or sashes, namely salus, guldars, sursullas and khash khashis 'untill you may be better confirmed in the sale of these already sent home'.[89] In case these clothes were sent to Turkey,they were bound to earn more profit and would sell 'mightie well' as they were the 'chiefest commodities wherein the Persians and Armenians who takes yearly passage on your shipps doe invest great summas of money in India'. Some of the above said variety had a good market in Gombroon from where they were 'dispersed and sold again to second merchants in Isphans, Basra and Baghdad. They in their turn transported them yet for a third market at Constantipole extraordinary charge of Camel hire, customs and other exactions on the way and yet all of these, the first, second and third buyers became great gainers and made it their constant trade of living.[90]

A large quantity of the Agra calicoes,like Daryabadis, Khairabadis,mercoles and Akbari cloth were purchased at Surat in the beginning of 1642. Most of these varieties,however,were transformed at Ahmadabad into bairamis,selas,qaseeds,large chintz

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[89]William Foster(ed), The English Factories in India,1630-33, pp.124-125

[90]Ibid.

and 'other sorts of sundry demoninations requested at Bantam and Mocha specially.[91] There was great demand for Indian cloth in the islands of Celebas as well. The varieties of textiles from India procurable at Celebas were, dragon, patta, mea, dorea, bafta, tzidle, 'ormesines' or tafsils red velvets, cavikeen, sallalo, patola, tzier and others. These varieties were mostly manufactured in Gujrat, Masulipatam, Coromandel coast, saint thome and Bengal.[92] President Penistas and Thomas Winter at Bantam urged upon the company to invest Rs 20,000 in the purchase of calicoes of from Coast for Bantam in 1675.[93]

In a letter of September 12,1651, the Company in London asked the Surat factors to supply to England mercles,daryabadis, Gujrat Baftas, tafsils, guines stuff, 200 pintado or chintz and 1,000 pieces of pintado.[94]

A letter of the Company dated 25 August 1662,advised the Surat factors that the weavers round Surat should be induced to make an imitation cloth in case of the mercole and Darayabadi cloth was not available at Agra.[95]

Thus, Indian textiles retained its importance throughout the 17th century and captured good markets in Europe and Asia.

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[91] William Foster(ed.),The English Factories in India,1642-45,p.6.

[92] Frederick Charles Danvers,(ed), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East,Vol.I, p.71.

[93] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.),The Diaries of Streynsham Master,Vol.I, p.259.

[94] William Foster(ed.),The English Factories in India,1651-54,p.196.

[95] Ibid., 1661-64, p. 187.

CHAPTER VIII

PRINCIPAL IMPORTS

The volume of imports from England was substantially less than her exports as the English goods did not enjoy much popularity in Indian marts. The main reason for the unpopularity of English goods was their expensive nature, and as a result the general consumers could not afford it. Therefore, most of the English goods like woolen, lead, tin, coral, quicksilver, vermillion and curosities like pictures, satins, pistal covers were brought to India, either exchanged with certain commodities or remained unsold for quite sometime. They were also given as presents to the 'influential people' in order to secure better trade facilities.

India always offered to the foreign traders valuable commodities like cloth and spices but in return took very few consumable commodities, and the result was that she had to be paid in gold or silver. Therefore, India came to be known as the 'sink of precious metals'.[1] The English merchant Tarry put it, "many

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[1]Archibald Constable(tr.), Francois Bernier's Travels in Mogul Empire, S.Chand & Co., Delhi, 1974, pp.202-204 (Reprint).

silver streams run thither as all the rivers to sea and there stay". The most conspicuous feature of Indian commerce was the absorption of the precious metals by way of the heavy exports by the Europeans from this country.[2] Hawkins remarked that 'India is rich in silver for all nations bring coin and carry away commodities for the same, and this coin is buried in India and goeth not out".[3]

Bernier also remarked that "Gold and silver after circulating in every other quarter of the globe, came at length to be swallowed up, lost in some measure in Hindustan". The Indian goods were in good demand in middle east and Europe and were held in high esteem there. "Thus, it happens that these countries are under the necessity of sending a portion of their gold and silver to Moka, on the Red Sea, near Bahel-Mandel; to Bassora, at the top of the Persian Gulf and to Bander Abassi on Gomboron near Ormus which gold and silver is exported to Hindustan by the vessels that arrive every year in the mausem, on the season of the winds at these three celebrated ports, laden with gold from that country. Let it also be borne in mind that all the Indian vessels whether they belong to Indians themselves or to the Dutch or English or Portuguese which every year carry cargoes of merchandize from Hindustan to Pegu, Tannaseri, Siam, Ceylon, Achen, Macassar, the Maldivas to Mozambic, and other places, bring back to Hindustan from these countries large quantities of precious metals, which

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[2]William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India,S.Chand & Co.,Delhi, 1968, p. 302 (Reprint).

[3]Ibid., p. 112.

share the fate of these brought from Moka, Bassora and Bander-Abassi. And in regard to the gold and silver which the Dutch draw from Japan, where there are mines, a part is, sooner or later, introduced into Hindustan; and whatever is brought directly by sea, either from Portugal or from France, seldom leaves the country, returns being made in merchandize". About the importance of foreign goods in this country, he remarked that 'I am aware, it may be said that Hindustan is in want of copper, cloves, nutmegs, cinnamon, elephants and other things which she is supplied by the Dutch from Japan and the Moluccas, Ceylon and Europe; that she obtains lead from abroad, in part from England; broad cloths, and other articles from France; that she is in need of considerable number of foreign horses, receiving anmually more than five and twenty thousand from Ushec, or great many from Persia by way of Khandhar, and several from Ethippia, Arabia, and Persia by sea, through the ports of Moka, Bassora and Bandar'.

It may also be observed that Hindustan consumes an immense quantity of fresh fruits from Samarkand, Bali, Bokhara and Persia, such as melons, apples, pears and grapes, eaten in Delhi and purchased at a very high rate nearly the whole winter; and likewise dried fruit, such as almonds, pistachio and various other small nuts, plums, apricots and resins, which may be procured the whole year round; that she imports a small sea-shell from the Maldives, used in Bangala, and other places, as a species of small money ambergris from the Maldives and Mozambic; rhinocers and porecelain from China, and pearls from Beheran, and tutucorny,

near Ceylone, and I know not what quantity of other small wares, which she might well do without. "The importation of all these articles into Hindustan does not, however, occasion the export of gold and silver, because the merchants who bring them find it advantageous to take back, in exchange, the productions of the country".

Supplying itslef with articles of foreign growth or manufacture does not, therefore, prevent Hindustan from absorbing a large portion of the gold and silver of the world, admitted through a variety of channels, while there is scarcely any opening for its return".[4] Tavernier also held the similar views like that of Bernier. According to him, it was always profitable to carry gold and silver to India, "in bullion rather than in coin" because 'gold and silver were not valued in India except by their standard and because there was always a deduction in coined money on account of the cost of minting.[5]

Herbert Moll has also corroborated that the ships came to India from England, laden with gold in order to buy Indian commodities. The author felt obliged to remark that "all the goods we carry

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[4]Archibald Constable, Francois Bernier's Travels in the Mogul Empire, pp. 202-204.It was for the above reasons that Bernier was obliged to call India as chasm or abyss of gold and silver.

[5]V.Ball,(tr.), John Baptise Tavernier's Travels in India,Vol.II, Macmillan & Co., London, 1899, pp. 13-15.

to India are a trifle, compared with the bullion and foreign coin - transported thither. Out ships are in a manner empty of merchantize when they go out, though there is hardly any of them carry less than 40 or 30 score thousand pounds of treasure which has made it a question, whether Indian trade of any advantage to this nation. But to this the company have answered, that the Indian merchandize which they export, again and sell in several part of Europe brings in more treasure than they carry out, and were it otherwise, since we should infallibly be supplied by the Dutch with their commodities at a much dearer rate, which they had monopolised the trade to themselves, consequently more treasure would be carried to Holland than is now carried to India".[6]

Careri endorsed Bernier's view that all the gold and silver, after circulating round the world, came to India. The American gold, 'after running through several kingdoms of Europe' wentto Turkey or Persia from where it went to Mokha on the Red sea, near Bah-al-Mandah to Basra on the Persian gulf to Bandar Abhas and to Gombroon and this money was afterwards sent over to Hindustan, for the Indian commodities purchased by these countries. Besides the Indian, Dutch, English and Portuguese ships that every year carry the commodities of Indostan, to Pegu, Tannessery,Siam, Ceylon, Achin, Maccasar, Maldive islands, Mozambique and other places,

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[6]Herbert Moll, The Present State of Proper India, pp. 255-56.

must of necessity convey much gold and silver to India from these countries". All that the Dutch fetch from the mines in Japan, sooner or later goes to Indostan, and the goods carried hence into Europe, whether to France, England or Portugal, are all purchased for ready-money which remains here.[7]

The East India Company was criticised from time to time by the Parliament for its pursuance of 'bullionist or mercantilist policy' as it was considered to be not in the interest of the country. In the defence of the company, Sir Dudley Digges published his famous pamphlet in 1615 entitled, 'A Defence of Commerce', showing that re-export of Indian goods from England to the continent had yearly exceeded the value of bullion exported from England to India. He proved that the English Nation had from the time of establishment of the East India Company saved 70,000 pounds a year in price of pepper and spice and had further benefitted from the commerce with India by the increase of the customs revenue and the building of great ships and the employment of large numbers of Englishmen in the Company's business. In the previous year 1614, the Company had exported to India £ 14,000 worth of English woollen goods,bays,Kersies and broad cloths" against 12,000 sent out in bullion; while the shipping employed that had cost 34,000 pounds and the provisioning of them and other contingents changes had amounted to 30,000 more.[8]

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[7] Surender Nath Sen(ed.), Indian Travels of Thevenot and Caveri, National Archives of India, Delhi, 1949, pp. 241-242.

[8] George Birdwood, Report on the Old Record of the India Office, W.H.Allen & Co., London, 1891, p. 210., p. 210; William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, Vol. I, p. 24.

Table 8.1

Exports of the East India Company in Money and Goods

Year	Money(Pounds)	Goods
1601	21,742	6,860
1603	11,160	1,142
1606	17,600	7,280
1607	15,000	3,400
1608	6,000	1,700
1609	28,500	21,300
1610	19,200	10,081
1611	17,675	10,000
1612	1,250	650
1613	18,810	12,446
1614	13,942	23,000
1615	26,660	26,065
1616	52,087	16,506
1617		
1618	2,98,000	1,52,000
1619		
1620	62,490	28,508
1621	12,900	6,523
1622	61,600	6,430
1623	68,720	17,345
1626	60,000(rials)	8,000
1629	2,00,000	53,500
1631	16,500	45,800
1633	1,15,900	
1634	20,000	
1635	1,00,000	
1636	35,000	
	30,000	
1638	20,000	
1640	40,000	

9. K.N.Chaudhuri, The English East India Company, the Study of An Early Joint Stock Company, Frankcass & Co., London,1965, p.115.

Import of English Goods

In 1609, William Finch whose estimations proved more accurate than many other factors gave a list of the goods which were destined to appear with a remarkable accuracy on the company's invoices during the next half a century. These mainly consisted of broadcloth, kersies, quicksilver, red lead, lead in pigs, blocks of tin, ivory, coral and sword-blades.[10]

Herbert Moll also furnished a list of English goods which consisted of the following items - Broad cloth, looking glasses, knives, gold and silver lace, kersies, knives, tin ware, wine, brandy, sword blades, beer and some other provisions. Some of the goods were mainly consumed by the factors in India.[11] The goods sent from England on February 25, 1615 were mainly elephant's teeth, lead, quicksilver, vermillion, tin, gloves, muscovy hides, knives, sword blades, 160 pieces of broad cloths for Agra besides pictures, glasses and blades. Master Edwards was of the opinion that broad cloth was not much in demand except if per chance some great men might purchase it. It was mostly used for 'wrapping the elephants and making a saddle'. Lead was sold at 7¼ mah. a maund, tin 30 mahmudi a maund.[12]

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[10] Frederick Charles, (ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Sampson Low Marstan & Co., London, 1896, Vol. I, p. 88.

[11] Herbert Moll, The Present State of Proper India, p. 255.

[12] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East, Vol. III, p. 8.

According to the English Factory Records, "the goods exported from England to India 'did not vary much in character during this period, (17th century). The chief items were broad cloth and other woollens, chiefly of English manufacture, tin, lead and quick silver, ivory brought no doubt largely from Africa in the first instance; coral from Mediterranean, amber from the Baltic, tapestries, gold and silver embroideries, sword blades and knives with some jewels for sale at court. On all these articles there was as a rule a considerable profit but the demand was limited and the English factors were obliged to rely for funds chiefly upon the importations of money'." [13]

The English factors were found to be very enthusiastic in the beginning and were very hopeful of disposing off their goods especially broadcloth as is evident from a letter written by Thomas Kerridge to Thomas Smythe on January 25,1613, where he mentioned that 'there is no place like Surat as it is the chief centre for selling the English goods'.[14] In another letter written on 16th January,1613, by the factors from Surat to the company, mentioning that sword blades(crooked one's) somewhat broad and thick would sell well there while Russian hides would not fetch much money'.[15]

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[13]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India, 1624-29, Introduction.

[14]Federick Charles Danvers(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East,1602-13,Vol.I, p.238.

[15]Ibid., pp.33,238.

Thomas Aldworth, who considered to be the founder of the Company's trade at Surat, wrote to the company in 1613 that not less than 1,500 pieces of cloth could be sold anmually in India and when the sale of the goods had been taken into consideration, there would appear a little need for sending any 'ready money'.[16] But the factors were soon demoralized and forced to admit to the company about their gross miscalculations. On August 1614, Thomas Aldworth and William Biddulp informed to the company that it was feared that not more than 300 cloths would 'vent' in India at the most and if not sold, there was every risk of its(cloth) being spoiled with worms and moths. The letter further ran... the high prices previously paid for the cloth due to the novelty and served only great men to cover some of their elephants and to make some saddles for their horses, but for garments they use none in those parts neither in rainy nor cold weather.[17]

The warning given by Francis Fettiplace and Robert Hughes from Agra to the company clearly revealed the scope of English goods in this country. They frankly admitted that they were no competent authority to suggest about the English goods to be sent from England. They, however, agreed that English goods had not a very 'prospective market' here in this country. A certain number of

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[16]William Foster,(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. I, 25 January,1613,p.238.

[17]Ibid., Vol. II, 19th August, 1614, p. 97.

cloths and quantities were admittedly, sold every year around Surat and also in Northern India but for the common buyer, the price of English cloth remained too high, and it was remarked that for the price of one yeard of broad cloth, the Indians could make three suits of cloths.[18] A letter written by Robert Hughes and Francis Fetiplace to the company throws light on the limited sale of English goods: "Our commodities remaining being cloth, swords, looking glasses and cony skins are so heavy and generally bad, and Agra so dispeopled of the buyers of such goods ever since the King's remove hence with his followers and great men that the former part of this year we sold but for very little. Neither is our cloth a commodity only unvendible, but to subject also to be spoiled and a damnified by the infinite abundance of worms here as that we can by no means keep it free of them nor is that respect durst reserve it for a better market, in so much that we are enforced to advice to Surat and other factories for the speedy remitting over unto us some good quantity of moneys, that with the help there of we might barter it away before such times as it were utterly spoiled. These considerations together with the great quantity of bad coloured and stained cloth, on our hands (unvendible for great money), incited us the last year to barter away some part of our so conditioned cloths for a coarse sort of indigo".[19]

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[18] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. III, 25 January,1615,p.8.

[19] Ibid., Vol. IV (1616), p. 245.

Regarding the scope of broad cloth, quick silver, vermillion and coral, the factors (at Surat) suggested to the company, that broad cloth had no market in Agra and that quick silver, vermillion and coral could be sold with considerable difficulty.[20] The factors wrote, "In our first bargains in barter, we rated our cloth at nine rupees per covado; but well perceiving that for ready money we could never attain to above six rupees a covado for our best reds and but five rupees for our yellow. Nearly 100 pieces were sold in barter delivering four colours. The other items like cony skin, looking glasses and pictures remained unsold and little worth".[21]

Main Exports of the British to India

Cloth and Woollens

In the beginning of 17th century when the English merchants were trying to develop new markets; cloth formed the chief item of export. The cloth industry in England remained throughout the century of great importance both for the stability and the prosperity of the Empire. Attempts were made for increasing sales of English cloth by regulating industry, improving the quality and opening up new centres for its sale.

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[20] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol.V, 1617, p. 250.

[21] Ibid., Vol. IV, 1616, p. 247.

It remained a matter of big concern for the servants and the directors of the East India Company to increase its sale in various parts of Asia and particularly in India.[22] To ensure better quality, a draper was taken into company's service to supervise the buying, together with the 'committees for cloth'.[23] The cloth was generally purchased 'white and coarse' and then dyed into the 'wanted colours' by the factors according to the demand.[24]

In 1614, when the company planned to send 800 pieces of cloth to Surat, the committees for cloth was earnested to report to the Black Hall every Thursday to buy such pieces as would be found suitable for export.[25] Despite the best efforts of the 'committees of cloth' to make and sell the cloth in a most systematic way, it could not receive much acclaim in India and mostly 'remained' unsold or 'eaten by moths'. In 1617, the Surat factors complained that broad cloth had 'become a very drug'.[26]

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[22]William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol.II, 19 August, 1614, p. 97.

[23]K.N.Chaudhuri, The English East India Company, Study of the Early Joint Stock Company, p. 139.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid.

[26]William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol.V, 1617, p. 23.

Thomas Kerridge, William Biddulp, Thomas Rastall, and Giles James at Surat wrote to the company on March 13, 1619 by way of complaint that there was a glut of broad cloth in India, though the price is not much stood on being used by the king and nobility. They further wrote that 'kerseys' were in fair demand, but bayes was of little use.[27]

On March 1619, the factors reported to the Company that there was practically no demand of broad cloth at Surat. The company was instructed not to send more than 40 or 50 pieces of broad cloth annually. The factors were highly depressed regarding the sale of broad cloth in India.[28]

In 1631, the English cloth remained again undisposed off. Although, the English had started expanding their trade activities in Orissa and Bengal too, yet the demand of the broad cloth did not seem to have risen much as in 1629, only 300 pieces of cloth were ordered by the Surat factors. No English cloth was sent to India for two years as mentioned in the Surat letter, dated 13th April, 1630.[29]

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[27]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21,p.78.

[28]Ibid, 1624-29, p. 63.

[29]Ibid., p. 325. Also see 1630-33, p.256.

President Rastall and others at Surat wrote to the company complaining that, "English cloth is the worst, they have ever seen in India. It would be better not to send at all that such as this". They(factors) asked them to send 100 pieces annually only.[30] Rastall again wrote to President Hopkinson at Surat on 23 January,1632, complained that the cloth was very 'coarse' and was'in poor condition.'[31] In 1634, at the request of the factors at Masulipatam, the President and Council at Surat decided to send a reasonable number of pieces of broad cloth along with other commodities in the ship Hart. The commodities were further sent to Golconda under Thomas Rogen and Aaaron Baker.[32]

According to a letter written by the factors at Balasore, the merchandize that came from England mainly consisted of broad cloth and lead which remained unsold for a year at Balasore as there was no 'suitable demand'. The goods were later on transferred to Patna.[33] At a consultation held at Balasore on 16th December, 1676, where Streynsham Master, Clavell, John Marshall, Edward Budden, Edmond were present, the members discussed the matter regarding the working of Balasore factory. It was resolved

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[30]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1630-33,p.129.

[31]Ibid., p. 194.

[32]Ibid., 1634-36, p. 49.

[33]Ibid., p. 30.

that English goods like broad cloth and lead which remained unsold for such a long time should be sent to the various English factories in small proportions as they were not sold at a particular place. The Council further decided to wrote to the company not to send more English goods, especially cloth as it was not salable at Balasore at all. The Council requested the 'various other factories' to use their influence in disposing off the English goods as quickly as possible as 'being much, for the nation's interest'.[34]

Again a similar consultation was held at Balasore where they decided that company sjould be requested not to send any broad cloth as it 'was hopelessly out of demand and they(the factors at Balasore) had a considerable difficulty in its sale and was bartered with Indian goods. The cloth was sold to various merchants of Balasore who managed to sell it at Cuttack at half the price.[35] According to Peter Mundy, the main items of English exports at Balasore consisted of broad cloth and divers sorts, vermillion, quick silver, lead, copper,real of eight and coral.[36]

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[34]R.C.Temple,(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master,John Murray, London, 1911, Vol. II, pp.77-78.

[35]Ibid.,p.85.

[36]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,Vol. II, pp. 220, 223.

President Fremlen and Messrs Breton, Robinson and Wylde at Swally marine to the company on December 29, 1640, informed that they had brought a quantity of broad cloth which was sold at cheap rates to the Governor, "who we believe will make them deserve attendance for their monies".[37]

On September 20, 1636, the factors from Masulipatam wrote to the company to send them good pieces of 'scarlet cloth'.[38]

President Fremlen and Messrs Breton and Wylde at Surat to the company on December 9, 1639, informed that broad cloth and coral were the two important items that Europe produced.Elephant's terth, vermillion, quick silver were 'vendable' but the factors were not sure about their sale, while the other goods including English cloth had a poor market at Surat or elsewhere.[39]

President Fremlen and Messrs Breton, Merry Bornford and Knipe at Swally marine to the company on January 17,1643,informed that the ship Supply was despatched for Gombron on February 25,1642 arriving there on March 19, sailed again on April 22 and on May 6, reached Umra, a village, three miles short of Surat. There she was 'docked' and repaired and then left for Sindh carrying broad cloth,

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[37]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1637-41,p.281.

[38]Ibid., 1634-36, p. 270.

[39]Ibid., 1637-41, p. 208.

lead, tobacco. She returned on December 31, brought back all the English goods including broad cloth which remained unsold inspite of their best wishes.[40] Coming back to broad cloth, the other notable reason for the 'poor market of the English cloth' in India was the Dutch competition. The Dutch cloth excelled both in texture finish and colour and it was more fine than the English cloth. The cheaper and superior Dutch imports thawarted the sale of English cloth. There was, moreover, the competition of Persians, Armenians and freemen(private merchant men) who were selling the same cloth at cheaper rates at Agra and Delhi. Moreover, English trade in cloth at Persia also suffered due to the English Wars with the Dutch. The following letter would reveal the position of English broad cloth. In a letter written to the chief and factors at Hugli(December 24, 1975), the court of the committees expressed dissatisfaction:

> "tosee the discouragement you gave in for sending out of broad cloth and woollen manufacturers.We and you must use our greatest industry to produce and a vent for them. The one course for this in their view, was that some of them had bought, cloth that went out in private trade and holding it up at a high rate".41

According to Richard Carnac Temple, "The broad cloth has been placed by itself as it was largely used in making presents

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[40]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1642-45, p.92.

[41]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.),The Diaries of Streynsham Master,Vol. II, p. 310.

to important personages to secure their good will. It was provided in fact, as part of the price to be paid for the goods to be bought for the return cargo. This indeed was also the 'destiny of the main part of the merchandize'.[42]

It was, therefore, felt sometimes by the servants of the company in India that large orders were sent without fully realizing Indian demand as it was well known that 'for the price of covid of our cloth a man will make himself two or three suits". Cotton ba fabrics were still more suitable for Indian climate than woollens, which were simply 'out of place' in India. They were only given as presents to influential people in securing trade facilities.[43]

Metals

The other commodities like iron, copper, tin, lead, quicksilver and vermillion were also imported by the English into this country. These commodities, were comparatively more popular than broad cloth. The first three commodities were sent to India on trial but found to be not much needed there. The Indian iron and the Chinese and Japanese copper brought by the Portuguese and Dutch were far cheaper than brought by the English. European tin was also not superior to the kinds imported from China, Tenasserim

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[42]Richard Carnac Temple, (ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. I, p. 133n.

[43]Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 77-78.

and the Malaya Peninsula. The Dutch had monopolised the exclusive rights to sell the tin to Asiatic countries. The English, nevertheless tried to break in the monopolistic trend of the latter but the Dutch opposition was too much for them for them. The case was quite different with lead. It was imported from Europe direct, or through Mocha and Ormus, before the coming of the English.[44] Finch mentioned the prices of lead and tin in 1609 at Surat being 8½ and 40 mahmudies, respectively.[45] In 1615, Elkington wrote to the company to send 1,000 pigs of lead,[46] and in 1617 the volume had gone considerably high as Thomas Kerridge informed the company that the whole kingdom had not 'dishurthened them of above 9,000 maunds at most and that 9,500 maunds were left in their store house.[47] This was a considerable supply and raised the English hopes to a great extent. The price of lead in 1623 and 1629 remained almost the same; 8½ Mahmudies, both at Surat and Ahmadabad. Lead at Surat was being sold at 5 rupees a maund in 1635, informed by the President to the company.[48]

Lead was exported to Middle East very frequently along with other goods. President Methold and Council at Surat wrote to the company on January 2, 1636, that the ship Francis sailed

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[44] Balkrishna, Commercial Relations Between India and England, Broadway House, London, 1924, p. 109.

[45] Frederick Charles(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. I, p. 28.

[46] Ibid., February 25, 1615. Thomas Elkington to the company, p.20.

[47] Ibid., 1617.

[48] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India, 1634-36, p.205.

for Dabhol with a cargo of lead, broad cloth tobacco, cotton wool, dates and some almonds and raisins brought from the Dutch. The factors had also sent 500 lb in English gold 'in case the goods would not provide sufficient cash.[49]

By 1629, the demand of lead at Surat and Ahmadabad increased to 1,000 pigs. But after 1632, the Governor of Surat banned the sale of lead by all the Europeans at Surat. He tried to monopolise the sale of lead and the 'monopoly' very much reduced the profits of English in lead.[50]

President Methowold and Messrs Fremlen, Breton, Pearson and Bornford at Surat wrote to the company on April 28, 1636 that since the Governor of Surat had monopolised the entire sale of lead so the lead was sold to him for 6½ mahmudies per maund of 18 piece.[51]

Lead for Masulipatam

At the request of English factors at Masulipatam, coral, broad cloth and lead were sent to them from Surat in the Hart. Some more goods brought by Jewel at Masulipatam were also added in the above mentioned goods and were sent to Golconda under the charge of two factors Thomas Rogen and Asaron Baker.[52]

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[49] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1634-36,p.149.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid., p. 205.

[52] Ibid., p. 49.

Again in 1639, the market of lead fell heavily and it was sold at 7½ mahmudies per maund.[53] Even after six years, the market of lead had not improved much. Thus, throughout this period, of fifty years, the price of lead remained almost the same. It was mostly used in making shot, packing cloth or manufacturing red lead. In 1649-50, small quantities of metal were sold or bartered, but even Captain Bridgam held out no hope of selling any quantity in Bengal. Two years later, it was declared as King's commodity and the price was 8 Mahmudies per maund. Thus, throughout this period of fifty years, the price remained almost the same.[54] Again in 1676, the sale of this commodity was completely banned by the Governor of Surat.[55]

Quick Silver

It was used right from the ancient times in making vermillion and other medicines. It was also used for extracting silver from its ores.[56] Finch and Elington, both reported to be 'always a vendible commodity'.[57] The market could not be 'glutted

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[53] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1637-41,p.

[54] Ibid., 1646-50, p.

[55] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, Vol. II, p. 85.

[56] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1646-50, pp.7,36.

[57] Frederick Charles(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. I,1602-13,p.28.

with what quantity can be attained in England'. The prices of quick silver varied from 240 to 350 mahmudies per maund but the reported discovery of the mine lowered the price to 200 mahmudies.

The demand for foreign mercury was much reduced so that the company was informed that one year or two were better for borne than sent.[58] The Dutch were also having a lucrative trade in quick silver. They sold quicksilver at Ahmadabad in 1636 at 38 rupees a maund, at which was 10 per cent more than the former price. In 1621, a small quantity of it was sold at 150 mahmudies per maund, which was equivalent to 4½s per lb. "Two thousand would sell at pleasure, was the report sent by the factors from Surat. From 1622, onwards, the demand seems to be very great and the prices were very high, ranging from Rs.85-98 in 1622 to Rs.125 in 1625 per maund, and 7s 4d. per lb in 1629. From the Dutch records, we learn that English had outdone the Dutch for some years in supplying India with lead, vermillion and quick silver for which there was a great demand.[59] The Dutch had an upper hand regarding the sale of this commodity(quick silver) for some time. They were selling it at Rs.62 in 1630, 140 mahmudies or Rs.60 per maund next year, 4s 6d. per lb. in 1632 and 90 mahmudies per maund in 1633.

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[58]William Foster(ed), <u>The English Factories in India,1622-23, 1624-29</u>, p.111, Introduction.

[59]Balkrishna, <u>Commercial Relations Between India and England</u>, p.111.

The English were selling it a bit cheaper as is evidenced from a letter written below:

> "President Methwold and Messrs Fremlin,Mountney, Turner and Cooper in Swally road, wrote to the Company on December 17,1634 that quicksilver was sold at 49 rupees a maund at Ahmadabad.Virji Vohra, a rich merchant of Western India(whose name often appears in the English and Dutch records, had purchased a large stock of quicksilver from the Dutch. The Dutch had sold the quicksilver and vermillion at a good margin of profit. 60

It is however, an accepted fact that the English could not extend their business for 50 years so far as the metals were concerned as the large supply of metals was made from China,Japan or Southern Islands where English were completely excluded as the Dutch or other European counterparts had a good control over these. President Blackman and Messrs Pearce, Oxenden and Breton at Swally marine wrote to the company on January 23, 1652 that the Dutch had brought such a large amount of quicksilver and vermillion that it was felt that "little profit is to be expected from these goods for some years; so the company will not suffer much loss from what has been brought by private merchants".[61]

From Madras Agency, a letter was written on January 10, 1665 to the Company where it was mentioned that quicksilver and vermillion sent by the company were not in much demand and declared as "dull commodities in India".[62]

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[60] William Foster(ed.),The English Factories in India,1634-36,p.205.

[61] Ibid., 1651-54, p. 108.

[62] Ibid., 1661-64, p. 381.

Method of Packing Quicksilver

The Company wrote to the President and Council at Surat, suggesting a method of packing quicksilver which was tried and abandoned being very expensive. The method was to place the quicksilver in copper pots soldered at the top. There was another device used by the Dutch which was better and cheaper and therefore, had been adopted by the company. It was more safe and economical. They used stone bottles for the purpose. The company informed the Surat factors in their letter of 27 March,1668, that they had not to send much vermillion as it was not in demand in Surat. Earlier on March 1666, the company in reply to the letter written by President at Surat had rejected the suggestion of packing quicksilver in copper pots on the score of expense.[63]

Coral

Next to quicksilver, coral was another important commodity or item of trade. It was in good demand from very ancient times. Kautilya, has made a mention of several varieties of coral. Even before the advent of the English, India had a good g trade in coral at various Indian ports. The English after their arrival in India became anxious in securing a share in coral trade.William Finch, in 1609 made a mention of red coral, a little quantity of

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[63]William Foster(ed.),The English Factories in India,1665-67,p.168.

which was sent to England for trial.[64] On October 28, 1613, William Bidulph wrote to the company from Surat that 'coral was the chief commodity at Surat and will yield 40,50,60 and 70 mahmudies one seer, being three quarters of a pound; the bigger it is the better'. He further informed the company that it had a wonderful market in Deccan, where it was considered not less than gold as the 'more they have of it in their house, the greater honour it is for them'. It was used for burning with the dead.[65] It was highly sought after commodity in the Deccan as they spent a lot on it(coral) and the 'meanest sort is sold for 20 and 30 shillings to a seer, the better sort is sold for 40 and 50 shillings and upwards.[66] Thomas Aldworth confirmed the accounts left by his predecessors and added that 300 chests of coral were usually brought from the Red Sea at a time and yet the market was not glutted.

In 1615, Elkington advised the company to send coral as it would tend to a great profit. The experimental period was over after 1615 and coral figured as a regular item of English trade. In 1616-17, when the question of transferring the English head-

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[64] Frederick Charles(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East,1602-13, p. 28.

[65] Ibid., p.301.

[66] Ibid., November 9, 1613, Vol. I, p. 307.

quarters from Surat to Gogo, on the Kathiawar side of the Gulf of Cambay arose, it was pointed out that the latter place was not "so fit for the vent of three of our main commodities,which are coral, lead and teeth". The report given by Thomas Kerridge was of considerable importance. According to him, "that the (coral) from Mocha is of a paler blue, yet they spare not to furnish this place(Surat) with atleast 300 chests at every return. You may boldly send by every shipping adventure, for greater quantities than is now supplied, and reply on a competent gain by such employment".[67]

The native merchants at Surat were naturally alarmed at the ever-growing quantities imported by the English and Dutch merchants. The company was informed that the people of country were 'in purpose to relinquish their coral trade out of the Red Sea, seeing ours so much better than theirs'. The Indian merchants therefore, made a joint representation to the Governor to prohibit the sale of foreign coral and its further supply by the European merchants. The Governor of Surat, Abdully Khan, therefore,issued orders forbiding the English the import of coral into this country. The English appealed against the prohibitary order, and were allowed to sell their coral at Surat or elsewhere for one year, provided they should bring no more of it. The English,after some-time, decided to try their luck in the Deccan as it was(as

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[67] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. IV, p. 152.

mentioned earlier) the most suitable place for selling coral. The Surat merchants prohibited the provision of calicoes to them. For the time being they quitely complied with the wishes of the Indian traders but they were certainly not going to give up such an advantageous proposition so easily. The Prince Shah Jahan was again informed about these happenings. According to the English Factory Records, the Prince after hearing such happenings lost his temper at the very sight of the royal order granting the provisional permission referred to above, and tore it up stating 'nothing else but the profit and bread of his people could content us'.[68]

The English were not going to submit to the restrictions imposed on the importation of coral. They thought of compelling the Indian authorities to remove the restrictions by seizing and capturing Indian ships in the Red Sea or anywhere else. Dahul, Gogha, Diu and Surat vessels fell a easy prey to them. Early in October 1622, English seized the home coming juncks and 'President and Council at Surat had embarked with the avowed intention of not returning except upon the grant of terms to their liking. There was a general consternation at this and not a little resentment. The Governor of the town, Bahadur Khan was pre-occupied with the problem of how to reduce the castle before the arrival of prince and Khan-i-Azam and more over he felt that all the forces of the

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[68] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21, p.325.

Mogul Empire were powerless against a single European ship. The English piracies created panic among the native merchants of the various ports, Dutch, too refused to give any assistance against the English.[69] The new Governor (Mirza Shadman) appeared on the scene and tried to pacify the English. The English demanded a sum of 2 million of mahmudis (About 10,00,000) as a compensation for the wrongs done to them and further threatened that 'unless satisfaction was quickly given and an agreement made for the future regulation of the trade, the junks and their contents would be carried away'.[70] Thus, the dispute was settled by the payment of a very large sum, the purchase of the whole stock of coral in the hands of the English and a firman was issued to them by Governor granting them in future a complete liberty of trade.[71] This was the beginning of the European dominance in India. Though Portuguese had also done considerable damage to the free and independent trade of India with the African and Asian countries, now the Sea power passed from Portuguese to Dutch and English who dictated their own terms regarding the trade whenever and wherever suited them. It was not merely the question of provision of coral that had been settled, but the right of free trade with Persia and other countries had also been secured. Such type of incidents clearly revealed the weakness and the inability of the mighty Mughal Emperors to check the ever-growing authority of the Europeans,

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[69] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India, 1618-21 p. xxx, Introduction.

[70] Ibid., 1622-23, pp. 30-31.

[71] Ibid., pp.31,54,130,137,151,176, 320.

especially English in India. Their (English) mastery over seas completely made the Mughals helpless to take any drastic action against them, therefore, they were fully exposed to the coming danger of the European powers in India.

The English trade in coral kept on increasing till it was stopped due to the wars in Deccan. Thomas Joyce and Nathanial Wyche at Masulipatam wrote to the company on October 25, 1634 to send them a good quantity of coral besides broad cloth and lead. Coral which arrived in Jewel was despatched to Golconda for sale (as it was in good demand there) under the charge of two factors Thomas Rogen and Aaron Baker.[72]

In another letter written by the above mentioned persons on the same date, mentioned that ship Swan reached Armagaon on June 13, 1633, carrying gold, coral and lead to the value of 2,458 lbs. sailed on 17th and arrived on 19th at Masulipatam. However, it soon recovered its pre-eminence and by 1633 three kinds of coral were sold at Surat at 8¾ rupees, 9½ rupees and 4 rupees per seer.[73] Their prices in England being 12s to 14s 7d. and 15s and 7d per lb. respectively. England's gains in coral trade were enormous. A good market was found at Masulipatam and Golconda where 20 or 30 chests of coral were sold which costs in England 14½ per lb. They were selling at 100 Pagodas a maund at Masulipatam in 1636.[74]

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[72]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1634-36,p.49

[73]Ibid., p. 40.

[74]Ibid., pp.204,208, 1637-41, pp.226, 228.

President Fremlen and Messrs Boreton and Wylde at Surat wrote to the Company on December 9, 1639 that broadcloth and coral were the two important commodities that Europe produced besides vermillian, iron and quicksilver.[75] Similar types of remarks were made by the President of Surat factory in 1639 that next to broad cloth, coral was 'the most staple and vendible commodity that Europe produced'.[76] In 1643, the price was reported to be 10½ rupees per seer of 18 pice, 'price not of late years head of'. Raibagh, Bijapur, Armagaon, Bhatkal, Cochin, Agra, Bengal,Malabar were some of the important centres of coral trade. The English gained a lot because of the wars ensured between Dutch and Portuguese. In 1644, the price of coral was 115 Pagodas per maund against 100 in 1636 at Masulipatam and 4,000 lbs were yearly demanded by the factors from the company. Thomas Ivy, Henry Greenhill and George Travel at Fort St. George wrote to the company on September 8, 1644 that they had sold five chests of coral 115 pagodas per maund and 4,000 lbs could be annually sent to them. The sort required was Grezid.[77] But soon peace was restored between the Dutch and Portuguese. The Company was informed by Surat factors that 'but now the Portugals have peace and open trade, we may not expect the like opportunities, since they will undoubtedly abundantly supply these markets in future'. After the

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[75]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1637-41,p.208.

[76]Ibid.,1642-45, p. 86.

[77]Ibid.,p.190.

year 1650, company was instructed not to send more stock of coral as it was a dead commodity and most of the coral at the disposal of the Surat factors was got rid after a good deal of struggle and was sold at a considerable loss.[78]

President Merry and Messrs Pearce and Oxenden at Swally marine wrote to the company on April 8, 1651 that a caravan of English goods was sent from there on March 18 from Swally marine to Agra under the supervision of Swinnerton. The English goods mainly consisted of broad cloth and coral. The company was instructed not to send more coral as it was selling at a very low price. Ten chests of coral were despatched to Coromondel coast in the ship Aleppo Merchant on the request of the factors there.[79]

The factors at Deccan factories informed to the company that English goods like broad cloth, lead, vermillion, quicksilver, coral would sell well there.[80] Coral was brought to Surat by London and Royal Charles. 'Grezio' variety of coral was sold at $11\frac{7}{8}$ rupees a seer while the other variety recadutte was being sold at $12\frac{3}{4}$ rupees per seer of 18 pice.[81]

The ship Richard and Martha came to Surat consisted of broad cloth, lead, coral, quicksilver, copper, ivory, brimstone and other goods to the value of 15,0301 and rials of eight invoiced at 5¦251 - total amount 3,52,651.[82]

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[78] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1646-50, p.301, Introduction.

[79] Ibid.,1651-54,p.57.

[80] Ibid.,p.211 (1655-60).

[81] Ibid.,p.200, 1665-67, p.31.

[82] Ibid.,1661-64,p.95.

In 1663, the factors informed to the company from Surat that 'Coarse Coral' was in good demand and 500 to 600 rupees worth could be sent.[83] The factors wrote to the company again in 1663 that the sale of English coral had likewise been hindered by Virji Vohra', 'threatening all other boyers from dealing with us for it whose greatness awes them all',where upon coral was sent to Ahmadabad and to some other merchants of that city, who had promised to come down to view the coral.[84]

The President and the company at Surat asked the company to supply them coral worth 40,000 rupees and elephants teeth worth 20,000 rupees. The company was asked to send them 100 maunds yearly.[85]

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[83] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1661-64, p.111.

[84] Ibid., p. 113. Virji Vohra was a wealthy merchant of Surat. The English started their dealings with him in 1619. In 1625, he was mentioned as 'Prime Merchant' of Surat. In 1628,he was mentioned as the 'Greatest Banian' merchant; in 1630 as 'Out old and accustomed merchant', 1634, 'the greatest and richest general merchant that inhabiteth this vast kingdome'. In Surat he was the largest creditor of the company and his Vakils or agents were employed in Agra, Ahmadabad,Burhampur and other cities. See William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-45.

In 1643, the Court of Committees, as recognition of his great services sent to him from England a 'iron chest from Nuremberg. See Court Minutes,1640-43, p. 309.

"There are people vastly rich in Surat and a Banian, a friend of mine, called Vargo Vora, is reckoned to be worth eight millions", See Thevenot.

[85] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1661-64, p.210.

The coral had been sold at a good profit at Surat, and the outlook for the future was promising, 'provided the company could reduce the amount of private trade smuggled out w which was so great to be a past belief.[86]

Madras Agency

The letter which Agent Chamber and his colleagues, sent to the company by Katherine on 11th January,1661. The company was advised to send more stock of coral as it was most suitable commodity for these parts. More of the coral was demanded for coromandel coast.[87]

Coral Hoarding - A Custom

In the Deccan they purchased as much coral as they could and boarded it up as if it was gold. The more they had of it in 'their base', the greater however, is for them and when they die they burn it all with them. Therefore, it was considered to be the most 'valuable and precious' commodity for the people there in Deccan and the more the person had it, the more honourable his position was considered to be.[88]

Ivory

Before the coming of the English in India, the large amounts of ivory were annually imported into this country by

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[86]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1661-64p.193.

[87]Ibid., p. 33.

[88]Ibid., Vol. I, p. 301.

Portuguese and many Asiatic merchants who got the ivory mainly from Africa. The first sale of ivory made by an Englishman, consisted of two elephant's teeth captured from an Indian ship. Finch has also made a reference of ivory in 1609.[89] In 1611, the English ship brought to Surat tusks, broad cloth, Kerseys, tin and red lead. The tusks were sold to at 62½ to 64 a mahmudies per maund in 1613. In 1614, the commodities brought by the English were sold at a good profit which was something beyond their imagination. The English depended for ivofy mainly on Africa, but the wars in Indian waters dislocated the Persian and African trade and thus reduced the necessary supplies of ivory.[90] The Surat factors wrote to the company on February 26, 1616, informed them that the elephant's teeth were imported in a great number and were sold at the highest rates; 53 mahmudies a maund.[91] In 1617, Nicholas Bangham was sent to Burhampur(with the suggestion of Captain Keeling and his Council with a view of establishing a factory there. He took with him certain English goods purely on the trial basis. The goods consisted of 60 pieces of broad cloths, 700 sword blades, 100 muscovy hides, 12 barrels of vermilion, not waters(arracks),looking of lasses,drinking glasses. Thomas, another accomplice of Nicholas thoroughly

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[89]Frederick Charles(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. I,1602-13,p.22.

[90]Ibid., p. 10,14,28,33,34,70,73,123,151.

[91]Ibid., Vol. IV, 1616, p. 105.

explored the possibility and scope of English goods there. He found a 'possible market' for English goods and informed the President and Council at Surat accordingly, upon which they (President) sent him more English goods consisted of 12 cwt. of quick silver, 100 elephants teeth and five hundred lead. The elephant's teeth were sold again at a considerable margin and the factors were very hopeful of the prospects of the future trade in India.[92] In 1622, the price obtained at Burhanpur was 32 rupees a maund, but Akbar's maund was 45 rupees a maund. The trade in ivory by English remained closed from 1630 to 1648. The reason being, the supplies from Mozambique and Malinde were very uncertain. A letter written from Surat in 1646 stated that 'Elephant's teeth' are constantly in these parts a staple commodity. The sorts formerly sent from England are now fetching Rs.30 a maund of 40 seers; which is about 2s per lb., and in England they will cost 10s or 11s per cwt.[93]

Thus, we can safely assume that though the English tried hard to sell their goods in Indian markets but their demand of goods was much less and they therefore, mostly relied upon Indian

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92. William Foster, (ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol.V, p.54,1617. Nicholas Banghan addressed to the Right Honourable and Right Worshipful, the Governor of the East India Merchants in London.

93 William Foster(ed), The English Factories in India,1622-23, pp.8, 108.

goods which captured good markets in Asia and Europe. Most of their goods 'including broad cloth' were considered to be the expensive items and therefore, beyond the capacity or reach of the general consumers. They were mostly bartered or given as presents to influential people in order to secure trade facilities.

Thus, it can be safely assumed that the English goods were not very popular in Indian markets due to their expensive nature. Most of their goods, including broad cloth did not have any market in India and were mostly used as presents or exchanged with the other Indian commodities after a good deal of labour. Foreign goods therefore, remained out of reach for the Indian consumers due to various reasons, while Indian goods captured a good market in Europe and Asia.

CHAPTER IX

TRADE ROUTES AND TRANSPORT

Transport and means of communication form an integral part of commercial activity. Fortunatedy, for the foreign traders, the contemporary Indian rulers has already contributed to the building up of roads and routes for the official administration and control of the various parts of their empires. In Medieval India, the process began with the rise of the second Afghan Empire.*

The most important feature of Sher Shah's successful administrative system was building of important roads which were well connected with the capital Agra and ran in different directions. It was a visible symbol of his administrative genius and imperial unity. The longest and best known road among them

*For the details of Ancient trade routes, see Moti Chandra, Trade and Trade Routes in Ancient India, Abhinav Publications, Delhi, 1977,pp.1-26.

was running from Sonargaon (Dacca) to the Indus, which was 1500 kos in length.[1] He built another road from Agra to Burhanpur and a third he made from Agra to Jodhpur and Chittor. The fourth road ran from Lahore to Multan. The roads were well planned and well connected with all the strategic frontier cities. For the comfort and convenience of travellers, shady trees were planted on both sides and serais (inns) were constructed at every two koses.[2] These serais were vertible artries of the Empire.[3] In every serai, he built different apartments for Hindus and Muslims. There was provision of water, bed, food and fodder for persons and their horses. In every serai, two horses were kept so that news from a great distance might reach him in one day' These serais served as halting stations of state officials and of the king himself for whom a special room was reserved.[4]

Under the Mughals, provincial governors and district officers were mainly responsible for the safety of roads but the

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[1]Kalikaranjan Qanungo, Sher Shah, Kar Majumdar and Company, Calcutta, 1921, p.388.

[2]H.M.Elliot and John Dowson, History of India as Told by its Own Historians, Kitab Mahal, Allahabad,1964, Vol. IV,p.417.

[3]Kalikaranjan Qanungo, Sher Shah, p. 392.

[4]Ibid., pp.390-391.

principal burden of protecting travellers and merchants from robbery and harassment fell on the zamindars.[5] They were required to appoint guards and other officials for such like purposes. The merchants specially the English while taking the goods from one place to another deployed their own guards who were well armed and remained at the front and the rear of the big caravans. For the benefit of the travellers, Jahangir ordered the zamindars to plant the trees on the routes between Agra to Attock on the Indus and between Agra and Bengal. In this way mile stones at every kos, wells,reservoirs and serais were provided for the comfort of the travellers and merchants along the roads while attendents or a regular staff was employed to keep the serais clean and worth living.[6] Thus, travel for men and merchandise became easier and more safe (although travelling was not considered that safe and free from dangers) during Akbar's reign. The annexation of Gujrat in 1573 had given him access to the sea and also an opportunity of getting important ports of Cambay and Surat, which were famous for their trade activities.

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[5] Alexander Rogers and Henry Beveridge(trs.), Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1909, Vol. I, p.321.

[6] Ibid., Vol. II, p.100.; H.Hosten(ed.), Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique, Hakluyt Society, Oxford,1927, Vol. II,pp.100-102; V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste's Tavernier's Travels in India, Macmillan & Co., London, 1889, Vol. I, p. 54.

According to the Ain-i-Akbari, there were thirteen large ports in Gujrat and several smaller ones.[7] Certain ports in Bengal like Satgaon, Hugli, Dacca, Rajmahal were very important and rose to great eminence but mostly controlled by Portuguese. In the West, Thatta was an important city and capital of Sindh. Its port Lahri Bandar was always humming with trade activities and was a very busy port.

During Jahangir's time, local chiefs were armed with power and were held responsible for the safety and maintenance of the roads. According to an estimate of Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, the road which went through Baramulla in Kashmir, the two important officers Mehdi Nayak and Husain Nayak were assigned the task of maintaining peace and order in that particular region and were known in reality,"the keys of country of Kashmir".[8] Sometimes these officers were required to make immediate contacts through some media, whenever any major disturbance or upheaveal took place in their region. The safety of the road from the Khyber pass to Kandhar was threatened by the activities of marauding Afgan tribesmen, so a strong contigent was posted at all the important out posts of the road, while

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[7] H.S.Jerret(tr.), Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta,1891,Vol.II,p.258

[8] Mehdi Nayak and Husain Nayak were incharge of the safety of the road between Hirapur and Baramulla, see Alexander Rogers & Henry Beveridge(trs.), Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, p.200.

the local tribal chiefs were required to police and maintain the road.[9] The very concept of making such men responsible for the maintenance, repair and safety of the roads seem to have greatly eased the movements of caravans and merchants.

But on the other hand, the picture drawn by travellers or merchants was not that sanguine and travelling was considered to be the most hazardous talk. Inspite of the best efforts of the Mughal Emperors, travelling was not considered very safe on the highways without proper precautions as the travellers or merchants had their pleasant and unpleasant experiences during their journeys. Highway robbers, in the eyes of law, were persons too powerful for travellers and who fell upon them with some weapon and robbed them when distant from the city. They were subjected to punishment if they were arrested before they had repented and returned the looted property.[10]

Ralph Fitch who was in India from 1583 to 1591, writes that 'there be very many thieves in this country which be like to Arabians, for they have no certain abode but are sometime in one place and sometime in another'.[11] While going back to the

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[9] Alexander Rogers and Henry Beveridge(trs.), Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol.I (1909), p.321.

[10] Fatawa-i-Alamgiri, Vol. II, p. 727, op. cit. S.P.Sangar's Crime and Punishment in Mughal India, Sterling Publishers, Delhi, 1967, p. 41.

[11] William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India, S.Chand & Co., Delhi, 1968, p.23 (Reprint).

Mughal Court, Father Monserrate, the Portuguese Priest, came across many thieves. He alongwith other companions reached Sultanpur from Surat in nine days and from their the 'party' sent to Sidwa. The Satpura range through which they had to pass was full of thick forests. 'The inhabitants of these mountains are always at war with the Mughals. The robbers here killed one of their guards and they could not take any action against them'.[12] Things were rather worse during the reign of Jahangir. On his way to Kabul in 1607, the Emperor halted at the village of Amrohi. There were 7,000 to 8,000 households of Kathurs and Dalzaks. The Emperor gave the information that these tribes were notorious for mischief, oppression and highway robbery.[13] Even the road from Agra to Lahore, which was planted on both sides with mulberry trees, was dangerously infested by the thieves.[14] William Finch who was in India (1608-11) records that at Sunera in Malwa lived a people called the gragias. They were 'theevish' and inhabited the hills on the left hand. They

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[12] J.S.Hoyland(tr), The Commentry Antonio Monserrate, annotated by S.N.Banerjee, London, 1922, p.13.

[13] Alexander Rogers and Henry Beveridge(trs.), Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol.II, p.100.

[14] Samual Purchas, Purchas: His Pilgrims, Journal of Richard Steel and John Crowther, Vol. IV, James Maclehose, Glasgow,1905, p.268.

often ungraciously entertain caravans. A hundred of them had done the like to a Caffila now, had not our coming prevented'. Further, on the way from Kulharas to Sp Sipri was also 'theevish! From Gwalior to Ahmadabad, remarked Finch, 'it was all sandy, woody country, full of theevish beastly men'. The way from 'here to Cambay was also sandy, woody and theevish'.[15] The Bay of Cambay according to him (Finch) was dangerous to cross. "When you are over the channell... theeves are not a little dangerous, forcing you (if not the better provided) to quit your goods,or in long bickerings, betraying you to the tyde fury, which comes so swift than ten to one you cannot escape'.[16]

William Hawkins (1608-13) while on his way to Burhanpur from Surat, was conducted at one place by a 'Pathan Sher Khqn, Governor of that lordship'. He accompanied the English with 40 horse men, went two days journey with him and rescued him from dangerous places, "at which time he met with a troupe of outlaws and took some foure alive and slew and burnt eight".[17]

English Trade Routes in India

The most important land route was from Surat to Agra (via Burhanpur) which terminated in one side in China and on the other in Persia. Its route was as follows:

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[15] William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India, pp.143-144.

[16] Ibid., p. 174.

[17] Ibid., p. 79.

Surat-Burhanpur-Gwalior-Dholpur-Agra, Delhi-Lahore-Kabul-Kandhar-Persia.

There was another route which started from Surat to Agra via Ahmadabad, Surat-Broach-Baroda-Ahmadabad-Roha, Bagra-Merta-Ajmer-Bayana-Fatehpur Sikri-Agra. Agra was also connected to Bengal via Benaras and Patna. The route was as follows: Agra-Etwah-Allahabad-Benaras-Patna.

There was another route from Bengal to Surat-Bengal linking Eastern extremity of Akbar's Empire with his western port Surat. So starting from Bengal, one could go as far as Burhanpur and then follow the old route to Agra.[18] Ralph Fitch followed the above mentioned route. The whole journey took him five months. His route was 'Mamlipatam-Bengal-Bellapore-Barrampore (Burhanpur) - Mandoa-Ujjain-Gwalior-Agra'.[19] According to Hawkins, 'The compass of the country was two years by Caravans: from Candhar(Kandhar) to Agra, from Songtone(Satgaon) to Bengal to Agra, from Kabul to Agra, from Decca to Agra, from Surat to Agra from Tatla (in Sindh) to Agra'. Almost all the roads led to Agra.[20]

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[18] D.Pant, Commercial Policy of the Mughals, D.B.Taraporevala & Sons, Bombay, 1930, p. 55.

[19] William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India, p. 26.

[20] Ibid., p. 100.

However, in Jahangir's time, Lahore became an important centre for trade while the importance of routes from Surat via Ahmadabad to Agra and from Agra to Patna had in no way diminished. Bengal had attained more importance due to the abundance of goods like cloth, rice, sugar, gum, lac, etc., and the rivalry increased between the various nations of Europe for the monopoly of Bengal trade.

William Finch has given a valuable account of the journey he undertook from Agra in 1609. His route was as follows: "Agra-Ranke-Badegesure(Jamalpur), Akhanpur,Hodel, Palwal, Faridabad-Delhi-Panipat-Karnal-Thanesar-Shahbad-Ambala. Sirhind-Phillur-ki-Sarai-Sultanpur-Lahore-Aminabad-Gujrat-Khawaspire-Rohtas-Rawalpindi-Hassanahdall, Peshwar-Dacca-Jalalabad-Badda-Charbeg-Nimla-Surkbah-Doaba-Camree-Kabul-Talik(a city in Badakshan). Regarding his route from Burhanpur and Surat has also been testified by a host of travellers like Roe,Jourdian, Mundy, Tavernier and many others. Surat-Burhanpur-Dholpur-Agra. For Lahore and for Surat, he chose the following routes: Agra-Delhi-Ambala-Sultanpur-Lahore, Agra-Fatehpur Sikra-Sikandrabad-Hindaun-Chandangaon-Ahmadabad.[21]

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[21]William Foster(ed.), The Early Travels in India, p. 123. Regarding the route or journey from Agra to Surat, Nicholas Ufflet, a partner of Finch has also described the route, Ibid., p. 170.

Peter Mundy gave a following measurement of routes from Surat to Agra via Burhanpur and from Agra to Surat via Ahmadabad:

"From Surat to Brampore (Burhanpur is accompted small course ... 170

From Brampore(Burhanpur) to Agra is accompted great course ... 226

117 small course at 1¼ mile per course is mile ... 212 1/6

226 great course at 1½ per course in mile ... 309

in all ... 551½

396 course of India make English miles ... 551½

Distance from Agra to Surat

Mundy started from Agra on a tedious journey on 25th February,1633 and reached on 25th May,1633,travelling 414 kos. From Agra to Sidhpur, 284 great kos amounting to 426 English miles. From Sidhpur to Surat 130 small kos, 172 miles 414 kos = 598¼ miles."[22]

Roads

According to Mundy, the road from Agra to Mahmudabad had a distance of 6 kos, and the road had two ranks of trees on both the sides. The trees, were distant from each other 8 or 9 ordinary steps, and 'the ranks from side to side about 40".

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[22]Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, Hakluyt Society, London, 1914, p. 272.

Mundy says that it was generally known at that time(August,1632) that there were such ranks of trees which reached as far as Lahore, a distance of 300 kos. There was such a row of trees from Agra to Patna, planted for the ease of travellers and for shade in hot weather. This was done under Jahangir's orders. The sorts of trees planted on the road side were niem, peepal, dhak, harb or banyan trees and other which kept green as most of the trees in India were.[23]

"Between Agra dnd Lahore which two cities are not by far the chief of the Empire, there is a distance of 400 miles. The whole intervening region is a perfectly level plain, andthe royal road is shaded on both sides by trees like a pleasant garden walk".[24]

"His Majesty ordered in 1619 obelisks to be erected at, the distance of every kos on the high road from Agra to Lahore at every third obelisk a well was sunk and each side of the road was planted with trees for the refreshment of travellers".[25] According to Bernier, the road between Delhi and Agra had a distance of "fifty or sixty leagues, the whole road is cheerless and uninteresting"[26]

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[23] Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol.II, pp.83-84.

[24] J.S.Hoyland(tr.), De Laet's The Empire of the Great Mogul, annotated by S.N.Banerjee,D.B.Taraporevale,Bombay,1928,pp.10-11.

[25] William Foster(ed.), The Embassay of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul,Hakluyt Society,London,1899,Vol.II,p. 527.; Gladwin, History of Hindustan, p. 47.

[26] Archibald Constable(tr.), Francois Bernier's Travels in the Mughal Empire, S.Chand & Co., 3rd ed. Delhi, 1972,p.284. (Reprint).

According to Mundy the journey from Agra to Surat was not comfortable; the main reasons were the badness of carts, weakness of cattle and length of manzil(destination). In general, they covered a distance of 8.9 or 10 kos a day and strong carts with heavy load went only from 5 to 7 kos. In those days of scarcity, Mundy observed, they had put into each cart 2 or 3 maunds of grain, etc., as provision, "whereas they were scarce able to stirr with what they had before, oxen died and failed daily, 'the labour and vexation contimue-all and extraordinarie".[27] Mundy further remarked that there was a time when a person,Mayoral, used to be in the cafila: He was a conductor incharge of a train of beasts of burden. He had a control over all the carts in general. Being of the same profession he knew how to deal with them,"to allow them what is fittinge to appont their tymes of setting out and place of rest, to compound their differences, to see them fitted(out supplied) and that they perform their taske. In fine to commaund over them. Whereas now they (the carters) doe and demaund what they list, goe, come sett out and remaine when and where they please. The like I say for the cammellers, also a trustie man or two to assist him that hath the charge of the caphilla, to ease him of his care and labour, to stand by him on all occasions, to counsel him in compounding of differences and quarrels, which have not beve a fewe in this caphila,consisting of

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[27]Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p. 272.

such diversitic of people and professions, as cammellers, carters, Balloaches, jutts, oftenlyness fightinge among themselves to mortal wounds, pillageinge one another like deadly enemies. I myself alone not being able to reconcile them".[28]

While going from Agra to Surat (return journey) Mundy and his party stayed at Jorang on 25th April, 1633. It was raining heavily. He caused the pals of tents to be set up. "The Camellers and Baluchis, imagining they were provided for them, got under, 'till I was baine to drive them out".[29] Then he could not persuade them to get the goods out of the wet, shifting out of the way from Pal to Pal, 'none to speake to them but myselfe'. With much 'adoe', he got them to bring under cover 150 fardles. Had the rains not stopped, goods might have remained lying in water. "This is the manner of their countrie people in tymes of neede. As Mr. Fremlen or any man else might well perceave att Bayana, when the goods lay soe long in the water. And if per chaunce they doe any service extraordinarie, they expect a particular reward, thinking themselves wronged if they have it not".

Distance from Surat to Burhanpur

Mundy found the distance between Surat and Burhanpur 170 kos and he took 17 days to perform the journey with three

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[28]Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p. 286.

[29]Ibid., pp.297-298.

major halts each day. Finch covered the distance in 16 days with two halts of two days each and he measured the distance as 166 kos and he took 19 days to reach Burhanpur with one halt of four days. Tieffentjaler found the distance to be 150 'cosses' which could be covered in 15 days.[30]

Safe Journey from Surat to Agra

Edward Terry conducted the journey from Surat to the Mughal Court where Thomas Roe was staying, a distance of about 400 miles in the safest manner as he did not bear any hardships or troubles during the long and tedious journey. He was accompanied by four Englishmen and about 20 Indians. They undertook the journey in the month of January alongwith 6 wagons drawn by oxen which the English company had had at Surat laden with rich English goods assigned to an English merchant at the Court. There were other wagons as well. When they stayed at some village or a large town, they made a ring of these carriages and pitched their tents within that circle. The entire journey of 400 miles was covered in full safety. At places known to be notorious or where they entertained any suspicion, they were helped by a 'Guard of Horse' afforted to them by prince Sultan Khurram. A footman sent by the prince always kept company with them. He had also letters to command a company or horsemen to guard them wherever necessary. They did not charge them any money for this help.They were lucky that they did not need their help throughout the

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[30]Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p. 504.

journey for their defence as there was all safety. Terry ascribes this to the very fact that Indians were in general very civil and they did not encounter any 'affrants or ill usuage from them, if they did not direct provoke them". After 7 days journey from Surat they reached Datia where the inhabitants offered them help despite the refusal of travellers. In the morning they demanded remuneration for this and were fully satisfied with the paltry amount of three shillings.[31]

In Shah Jahan's time the overland routes from Multan and Kashmir had lost their importance on account of the disturbances on the Frontier. The Indo-Persian wars regarding the occupation and retention of Kandhar had caused great disturbance to these trade routes and other routes which linked them to Surat. The sea trade between Surat and Gombroon had become more important and beneficial and English earned a lot by selling English and Indian goods at a considerable profit.

The overland routes were as follows: (1) Multan-Chotiali-Pishin-Kandhar-Persia; (2) Kashmir-Afganistan-Persia and from there to Europe.[32]

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[31] Edward Terry, A Voyage to East Indies, J.Wilkie, London,1777, pp.391,393-394.
The author was a Chaplin to Sir Thomas Roe, during his stay in India, maintained a journal of his travels which were first published in 1655.

[32] D.Pant, Commercial Policy of the Mughals, p. 56.

Tavernier has given a detailed description of the route which he took from Surat to Agra via Ahmadabad. His route was: Surat-Broach-Baroda-Nadiad-Ahmadabad-Paunsir-Mesana-Sidhpur-Palampur-Dantawara-Wungaon(Jodhpur) - Bheermal-Modra-Jalore-Khandap-Sutulana-Dipar-Merta-Barunda-Bander-Sonnery-Ludana(in Jaipur) - Chaksu-Lalwali-Hinduan-Biana-Fatehpur Sikri-Agra. The distance according to Bernier from Surat to Agra was 415 kos. The journey could be completed in 33 days with just one halt at every 13 kos daily, but it was more tedious and irksome, so 'one completes the journey in 35 to 40 days'.[33]

Mandelslo, a German, educated at the Court of Duke of Holstein visited India in 1638-39. His accounts of the conditions of travel in Gujarat are very revealing and absorbing. It is interesting besides for the light it throws on the personal bravery and that of his companions, but for them and the soldiers under them, the caravan would undoubtedly have been mercilessly looted by the robbers. There were not further mishaps than this and passing through Baroach and Ankleswar party at last reached Surat on December 1638. He describes travelling in Gujrat as unsafe on account of the depredations of the Rajputs.[34]

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[33] V.Ball,(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India,Vol.I, pp.66-89.

[34] M.S.Commissariat(tr.), Mandelslo's Travels in Western India, Oxford University Press,London,1931,p.14.

Thus, we can safely conclude that the travelling in Mughal Empire was not safe, despite the best efforts of the Emperors to provide it. Those were not the times of adequate communications and if some group or persons resorted to dacoity or plunder, he could easily do so as long as sufficient forces were not sent against him. Travellers who have left the accounts of their unsafe journey perhaps forget to mention the condition of travels in their own countries.

Transport

The caravan was both oldest and the most popular method of travelling in large groups. It provided the maximum of safety and security and made an important contribution to social and commercial life of the country. The English caravans were particularly well guarded as they would deply the armed men for the security and well-being of the caravans.

Multan and Kabul were the two important meeting places of caravans from West and Central Asia. Manrique was of the opinion that caravans from Persia, Khurasan and other countries generally returned in the company of Mughal caravans as they felt there more secure. Sometimes the travellers or merchants had to wait until a caravan arrived, or until enough people were collected to form a caravan. As caravans were frequent, one would not have a long wait before resuming his journey.[35]

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[35] H.Hostein(tr.), Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique, Hakluyt Society, Oxford, 1927, Vol. II, pp. 221-222.

When Peter Mundy left Surat for Agra in November,1630, he had only 150 people and 15 to 20 carts and some camels in his caravans but soon the number swelled to 1700 to 1800 persons and 250 to 300 carts besides oxen and buffaloes, as the careers of transport.[36] A leader, controlling the caravans was a must. His influence, knowledge of the route and efficiency was of tremendous help to the other members, forming the caravan. He was also (leader) expert in the art of handling the complicated and delicate matters like dealing with the customs officers, and occasionally was able to pursuade the custom officer to evade the customs and rahdari though most of the times it was not possible as the officers would often delay or stop the caravans, particularly the English caravans in order to get suitable bribes. Sometimes, on the insistence of Governor, the officers would stop the caravans and would release it only on payment of a stipulated sum. As happened in 1653-54, when the big caravans of Saltpetre were stopped and released only after making ood payments as a bribe.

Mundy and his party came to Biana on 28.2.1632 in the company of Faujdar Baqir Khan, a mughal mansabdar, who promised to protect and free them from paying custom on the way. Mr.Fremlin had formerly agreed with Adaviya or Adavi(a contractor for customary payment enroute(ada), a transport contract, for Rs.9½ per

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[36] Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,Vol.II, pp.45-46.

camel, tp pay the custom of the goods from Agra to Ahmadabad. "But on the confidence of this occasion (repaying on this opportunity), they were dismissed".[37]

Peter Mundy led such caravans on more than two occasions. Mandelslo also led the caravans from Surat to Ahmadabad from September 30 to October 12, 1638. The Kafila or caravan which Mandelslo led at Surat on the last day of September 1638 was sent by the English President at Surat from there(Surat) to Ahmadabad consisted of 30 wagons laden with quicksilver, spices and a considerable sum of money. The young German traveller was thus assured that he could undertake the journey without any danger from the Rajputs who frequented the country and lived as robbers. These were described by the traveller as 'Tories' or 'highwaymen' who had their haunts in the mauntains of champaner and had the audacity of attacking the Mughal caravans too. The caravan was looked after very well due to extra vigilance of Mandelslo as at times he showed a great personal bravery to protect it while leading back the caravan to Surat, there was

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[37]Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, Feb.28,1632,p.273.

every likelihood of their being attacked near Broach by robbers but due to the watchfulness of Mandelslo and the altertness of guards and the soldiers, the robbers dared not attack them and the danger was averted. The Caravan safely reached Surat on December 1638.[38]

On the whole, the foreign merchants organised their caravans properly. Their main purpose was to collect and transport goods to Surat, from there they were shipped to Europe.

Caravans usually travelled during the dry season,[39] starting the journeys three hours before dawn and resting before noon.[40] In the morning the drums were beaten to announce the departure of the caravans.[41]

Peter Mundy when reached 'Sirohi' in Rajasthan, was informed that a Dutch caravan was looted there. About 60 robbers attachked the caravan and scattered many camels laden with goods and slipped away 'carrying 11 and 8 fardless of indigo'. The Dutch found the rest of the camels and indigo in woods. One Baluchi

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[38] At this time William Methwold was the President of the Surat Factory for 7 years. He was a man of strong character and great ability who stood 'head and shoulders above his immediate predecessors'., M.S.Commissariat (tr.), Mandelslo's Travels in Western India.1638-39, p.15n.

[39] Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.),The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p. 95.

[40] H.Hosten(tr.),Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique,ed.by Eckford Luard, Vol. II, pp.145-146.

[41] Ibid.,
Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,Vol. II, p.42.

(guard) was killed and burried by the wayside. Signor Solomon Voorknekt left two servants and demanded the recovery of goods, 'whereof they had had gotton in parcels about 3 fardlas indigo'. The rest, with the camels irrecoverable, being carried away by the people of Rana. Mundy was thankful that they were not molested by the robbers.[42]

The members of the caravan had to guard against both attack from without and betrayal from within. To ensure added protection of the caravan, armed sentries and guards were hired. The Mughals were aware of the hazards of the travel and ordered strong measures to maintain peace and security. William Finch (1608-1611) found many goods and police posts whose purpose was to prevent robbery, and attend to the welfare of travellers.[43] That robberies and attacks on caravans often took place indicates that the guards sometimes failed in their task. In Akhar's time, if some robbery took place on the highway, it was considered due to the carelessness of the local Kotwal or Zamindar, as he had either to recover the stolen property or pay compensation.[44]

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[42]Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p.256. Koli was a term applied to villagers in 17th century and especially estended to marauding Mine Rajputs who were the bane of travellers.Herbert calls them that rascall race of Coolyes, that so unjustly and theevishly robed the caffilas",Archibald Constable(tr.), Francois Bernier's Travels in the Mughal Empire, p.88n.

[43]William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India, p.144.

[44]Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. II, tr. by H.S.Jarrett, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1891,pp.41-42.

Mughals tried hard to make travel safe but more or less it was the duty of the caravans to take precautions themselves like employing guards to escort them on their journeys. Armed guards and sentries had to be hired to protect the caravan, not only from highway robbers but from wild animals when it halted near some forest or a hilly place.[45]

Mundy while on his way through Rajasthan found Mehsana very dangerous due to thieves. He saw that a Koli came to a person lying nearby and ran away after snatching his things. When he tried to run after the thief, the 3 other standing nearby stopped him from running by shooting an arrow towards him. The arrow was taken out after considerable difficulty. "Thus, they raigne without controll".[46] On April 24,1633, while passing through Ahmadabad (Mundy and his caravan), 15 thieves fell on their camels while feeding. They took one of them and the rest ran away. The man who was made prisoner wounded Baluchi guard with his arrows. The man was presented before deputy of Saharyar, Governor who plainly took his share. According to Mundy, this place (between Ahmadabad and Agra) was very dangerous,as it was infested with robbers who spare none.[47]

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[45] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.II, pp.237-238.

[46] Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p. 263.

[47] Ibid., p. 264.

William Hawkins, one of the earlier travellers started from Surat at the beginning of 1609, he hired 50 pathans with the help of one of the officers of the Khan Khanan. They escorted him safely to Dhatia(a small town, 90 miles from Surat) and they were then relieved by another group of forty horsemen. At Burhanpur, the guards were changed again.[48]

Peter Mundy says that during their journey from Agra to Surat on April 7, 1633, they paid the cart drivers,camellers, peons and servants 'chanderate', a gratification which they expected every new moon. He was told by Fremlin to pay the cammellers 20 rupees but he paid them 60 which amount they refused to accept. They rose and started weighing the goods. Then they came in the open and danced for two hours. Afterwards they started demanding more money saying that out of 14 only 3 had been left out. They further complained that some of their camels had been killed due to overweight.They(drivers,etc.) insisted that goods should be immediately weighed and payment should be made to them instantaneously. Mundy quited them with payment of 120 rupees as Inam with the promise to get the goods weighed at Ahmadabad. They said that they had not got the goods weighted at Agra as the ropes and skins, were wet(according to Fremlen) and therefore, accurate weight could not be had. And they would do it on the way 'where and when they listed'.[49]

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[48]William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India,pp.78-80.

[49]Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, pp.293-294.

After the journey ended at Ahmadabad, Mundy alongwith Knipe and Wyche went to Bakir Khan, now Governor of Gujrat, with a small present, the gratification of his good will. It was rejected and they were not allowed to see him. They, then went to Cutwall Khan, who they understood demanded not less than Rs.20,000 for services rendered on the way in saving them from customs. On 2nd May, they (Mundy) and party decided to pay him Rs.2,000 as Mihmani (a banquet feast). They carried the money to Cutwall Khan, whom they took to be their friend in this affair. Money was again returned to them from Bakir Khan. At last, the matter was settled at Rs.4,000. The money was paid after the temporary detention of Knipe. Wyche and the broker by the Governor, who fearing danger agreed to pay. "Paid to their freifes, the said 4,000 rupees, which hee so dishonourablie and unjustlye extorted from us, to his reproach, the knowledge and detestation of the whole cittie, whoe much feare his future tirannical Government".[50]

Bats

The Turkish traveller Seidi Ali Reis says that in India, there was a tribe amongst the 'learned(Bami)' of this land of Banias called as the Bats. Their business was to escort merchants or travellers from one land to another. For a petty remuneration they guaranteed their perfect safety. In case of Rajputs or 'the mounted troops of the land' attacked the caravans, the Bats pointed

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[50]Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, pp.298-300.

out their daggers at their own breasts threatening suicide. Out of respect for the Bats, Rajputs desisted from their evil purpose and allowed the travellers to proceed unmolested. Occasionally, they carried out their threat. But if such a thing happened and the suicide of Bats became necessary, a terrible calamity befell the country and in that case, people demanded the offenders to be put to death. And the chief of the Rajputs deemed it necessary to kill their sons and daughters also, 'infact to exterminate the whole of their race'. Seidi Reis had also two such persons given him by the Ahmadabad Muslims.[51]

According to Tavernier, there were four tribes in Indian called 'Manaris', each numering about one lac, lived in tents. There main job was to transport provisions from one place to another. The first of these tribes dealt with corn; the second with rice; third with pulse and fourth with salt.[52]

Banjaras

Another tribe which helped the trade or traders were styled as 'Banjaras'. They were perhaps the most widely travelled tribe in Medieval India. The term banjara was mainly applied to the itinerant grain, salt and cattle merchants, who lived in tents

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[51] A.Vambery(tr.), The Travels and Adventures of the Turkish Admiral, Sidi Ali Reis, Luzac & Co., London, 1899, pp.34-35.

[52] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.I, p.41.

and moved about with their live stock and carts. They visited the remote and most inaccessible regions. Comprised of both Hindus and Muslims, they claimed a common origin and affinity. Divided into many branches and sub-branches, they were scattered all over India. They owned bullock, bullock carts, cows, horses, camels and tents, and travelled in large parties consisting mainly groups and other tribal members.[53]

They were the main supplier of grain and other victuals to the royal camp. Monserrate attributed the plentiful supplies of provisions and other commodities available to Akbar's army to the emperor's policy of encouraging banjaras to join his camp. He exampted them from tolls and taxes.[54] They were considered to be the most honest people and could be relied upon for any responsibility entrusted to their care. They were mostly paid advance money (due to their honesty) in order to ensure that there was no shortage of supplies at the twelfth hour. Even during the war they were not attacked by either army.[55]

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[53] William Crooke, The Tribe and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Calcutta, 1896, pp.149-150. Also see, William Crooke, Races of Northern India, Cosmo Publication, Delhi, 1973, p. 117.

[54] J.S.Hoyland (tr.), The Commentary of Father Monserrate, annotated by S.N.Banerjee, Cuttack, 1922, pp.79-80.

[55] William Irwine, The Army of the Indian Mughals, Eurasia Publishing House, Delhi, 1962, p. 192 (Reprint).

For the further study of Travel and Transport, see Abdul Khair Muhammad Farooque's Roads and Transport in Mughal India, Idarah-I Adabbiyat-I Delli, Delhi, 1977, pp.57-70.

Peter Mundy on his journey to Patna met many of the caravans belonging to Banjaras. Near Allahabad, he saw one going to Agra with 14,000 oxen laden with grain, 25 members carried their household with them.[56]

Tavernier saw a 'banjara caravan' with ten to twelve thousand oxen laden with all sorts of commodities going from one end of the country to the other. Tavernier was impressed to see the pair of oxen and which cost not less than 600 rupees.[57]

Banjaras started their journeys at sunrise and generally travelled from ten to 15 miles a day which was the usual custom with the other travellers or caravans.[58]

Adaviyas

Next to Banjaras there was another group of transport contractors known as adaviyas. They were an organised group particularly operating in western India. They were big assets to traders. They were either paid a lum sum to accompany a caravan and to provide important items such as bullocks and camels. They had left their own agents who contacted caravans for the transportation.[59] At the time of need they supplied the

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[56] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.),and L.M.Anstey(ed.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, pp. 95-96.

[57] V.Ball (tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India,Vol. I, pp. 39-40.

[58] Richard Carnac Temple & L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p. 96.

[59] Ibid., p. 291.

caravans with all kinds of modes of transport like cart, camel, bullock, etc.[60] Their business was mainly centrered around Surat from there they operated in other places.[61]

Oxen

Indian oxen were generally used for the purpose of carriage and were sometimes shod. They were swifter than their English counterparts and would carry a man 20 or 30 miles day. It was a common sight in India to meet a caravan of about ten thousand of oxen employed in in carrying salt, rice and grain from one place to another.

The drivers of these oxen (Banjaras) followed only this profession of carrying grain, etc., and had no fixed abode (already discussed under Banjaras). These banjaras kept the horns of their oxen trimmed. Ten or twelve of them were employed in drawing heavy carriages, but only two in their coaches, each coach seating only two persons. The oxen were fed with balls of paste made of flour and other ingredients, as also mentioned by other travels.[62]

Fryer had a great praise for the Indian oxen. At Surat he saw a number of them. According to him, "Here are brought up large gallant milk-white oxen with circling horns, artifically

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60Richard Carnac Temple & L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p.247.

61Ibid., p. 299.

62Herbert Moll, The Present State of Proper India, p. 260.

modelled in cases which they tip with silver, gold or brass, and make them shine like jet, putting a rope through their nostrils, and an headstal on them of London cloath, surrounding their necks with collars for bells, feeding them delicately as their horses; and one of these fitted for a coach, will sell for 30 or 40 rupees. The other oxen are little, but all have a bunch on their back.".[63]

The milk white oxen of Gujrat have long been famous. "The Gujrati oxen are good draught cattle, they are of a pure white colour, handsome indeed their beauty is the wonder of all beholders".[64] Pietro Della Valle describes them as "fair, large, white with two bunches like some camels, and run, and run, and gallp like horses.[65]

In the 17th century, the Indian ox was anoble fleet of foot, strong of limbs and habitated to long journey and the ox chariot was not deemed unworth of royality. According to Thomas Roe, the merry monarch Jahangir once had a joyride with his beloved Nurmahal in open wagon, "drawn by bullocks, himself

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[63] William Crooke(ed.), A New Account of the East India and Persia, Hakluyt Society, London, 1909, Vol. I, pp.295-96.

[64] Edward Clive Bayley(tr.), The Local Muhammden Dynasties; Mirat-i-Ahmadi by Ali Muhammad Khan, S.Chand & Co., Delhi, 1970,p.2, Introduction.

[65] G.Havers(tr.), The Travels of Pietro Della Valle,A Noble Roman into East Indies and Arabian Deserts, Hakluyt Society,London, 1892, p.21.

carter and no man nearre".[66] It may be argued that the cart was selected on this occasion more for fun than for comfort but Mundy once saw twenty "coaches for the king's use whereof two only were drawn by two horses" and the rest 'by oxen some of extra-ordinarie greatness and some againe as little, chosen of purpose".[67] The English President of Surat, William Methowold sent an 'Indian Coach, drawn by white oxen, to bring Mandelslo, a German traveller to his house; and when German traveller visited Ahmadabad, Benjamin Roberts, the Chief of the English factory there, came to receive him with his coach. "His coach made after the Indian fashion, was gilt all over, covered with several pieces of Persian tapistry, and drawn by two white oxen, which expressed as much metal as we could have expected from the best horses in Germany. At another place Mandelslo writes, "In travelling through the countrey, they make use of camels, mules, horses and oxen. They also have a kind of coaches, for two or three persons, which are drawn by oxen, whereto they are so accustomed that they easily get ten or twelve leagues a day. The upper part of the covering of those coaches is of cloth or velvet; but those which carry women are close of all sides".[68]

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[66] William Foster(ed.), The Embassay of Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, Hakluyt Society, London, 1899, p. 426.

[67] Richard Carnac Temple & L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p. 193.

[68] M.S.Commissariat (tr.), The Travels of Mandelslo in Western India, pp. 12, 22.

Herbert mentions chariots drawn by baffaloes and poorer people not infrequently rode baffaloes and oxen which Mandelslo found exceedingly uncomfortable. But Tavernier had a different opinion about these oxen who pull the chariot. According to him, 'oxen' take the place of horses, and there are some of them whose paces are as easy as those of our backs".[69]

Pietro Della Valle remarked that the travelling by chariot driven by oxen was advantageous as he (the traveller) while travelling from Surat to Cambay in two of these country chariots and crossed a shallow part of the Gulf of Cambay at low tide without even wetting the floor, for the water didn not come above the belly of the big oxen. Pietro and the lady squatted inside the chariots in good Indian fashion.[70] Coach oxen were not at all very expensive as Tavernier purchased a pair in 600 rupees but he (Tavernier) warns the reader not to be surprised for some often 'make journeys lasting sixty days at 12 or 15 leagues a day and always at the trot".[71] On another occasion Tavernier cautioned against buying an ox with long horns (not more than 1 foot) as

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[69] M.S.Commissariat(tr.), The Travels of Mandelslo in Western India, p. 65; V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol. I, p. 43.

[70] G.Havers (tr.), The Travels of Pietro Della Valle into East India and Arabia Deserta, London, 1664,p. 36.

[71] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India,Vol.I., p.44.

"when the flies sting him, he chafes and tosses back the head and may planta a horn in your stomach, as happened several times". These oxen, he further remarked, "allow themselves to be driven like our horses, and have for sole briddle a cord, which passes through the tendon of the muzzle or the nostrils". In level tracks, the oxen were not 'shoed' but in rough tracts, were always protected against heat and stones and therefore,'properly shooed'. On completing half the journey the oxen were fed with balls made of 'wheaten flour,kneaded with butter' and sugar and evening they were given chick peas, crushed and steeped in water. The journey from Surat to Agra took 35 to 40 days by road, and the traveller paid only 45 rupees.[72]

Manrique had a similar experience when he went from Patna to Agra in a bullock cart in 1641. According to him when he expressed the desire to hire horses they (people there) advised him that it would be more convenient and serve him better to take a cart. "These are covered like our coaches and not only protect one from the inclemencies of the weather but also from bodily concusions,... these roads are more suitable to oxen instead of swift horses, they attack in these parts halting, slow paced oxen". "With this conveyance we continued our journey,adhering to the well known rule that is always observed in these parts in

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[72] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.I, pp. 43-45.

journeying during summer time, and that is to start three hours before dawn until eleven O'clock, on account of the heat.[73]

According to Pietro Dalla Valle who saw in Surat coaches like the ancient chariots described by Strabo. They were generally covered with crimson silk, fringed with yellow round about the roof and the curtains. They were drawn, as in ancient times, by oxen, 'fair large and white', which galloped like horses. They were also covered with the same stuff 'but beset with many tufts or tassals, and abundance of bells at their necks; so that when they run or gallp through the streets they were heard at a sufficient distance, and made a 'very brave show'. "With these kind of coaches in India, they not only go in cities, but also for the most part travel in the country".[74]

The Indians used carts to travel and when women travelled, these carts were enclosed by Purda (curtain). These carts were drawn by oxen and when the journey was short, by asses. The well-to-do used elephants or Palanquins.[75]

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[73] H.Hosten,(tr.), Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique, Vol. II, pp. 145-146.

[74] G.Havers(tr.), The Travels of Pietro Della Valle into East India and Arabia Deserta, London, 1664, p. 11.

[75] Surindera Nath Sen(ed) Indian Travels of Careri and Thevenot, National Archieves of India, Delhi, 1949, p. 249.

Coaches, from Swally to Surat

The coaches in which they (Fryer and others) travelled to Surat were breaking. "We were forced to mount the Indian Hackery (Chhakra) a two wheeled chariot, drawn by swift little oxen... on the other side of the river, four wheeled coaches expected us". "The coach where the women were, was covered with cheeks (a sort of hanging curtain made with Bent's variously coloured with Lacker and chequered with packthred so artifically, that you may see all without, and your self within imperceived; ours was open, and guarded by such a troop as went to apprehend our saviour, dressed after the same manner we find them on old lands skips, and led by the same Phanatick lights we see there painted".[76]

Carriages, Patna to Agra

According to John Marshall "at Pattana coaches, oxen, horses, are every month let to Agra (except, 4 months in the rains) An oxen is let for 12 rupees, the owner thereof being at the charge of a man to go with the ox, and also for the ox meat; and this ox will carry 4 maunds".

"A coach which will carry 40 maund and goes within 6 oxen is let for 80 rupees. A coach that will carry 4 men and goes with 2 oxen is let for 22 rupees. A horse is let for 10

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76 William Crooke(ed.), John Fryer's New Account of East India and Persia , being Nine Years Travels, Hakluyt Society, London, 1909, Vol. I., p. 235.

rupees Cahar (Kahar) to go with a Pallenkeen will have 5 rupees per piece, besides 1 seer dall (dal, pulse) a piece every day, which will amount to 1½ rupees per piece more, in all these cases of oxen, coaches, horses or wagons, the owners thereof are all charges, except custom paid at places for the goods carried.[77]

Horses, Camels, etc.

Horses, ponies, mules and even donkeys were employed for riding or carrying goods from one place to another. In sandy places like Rajasthan and Sindh camels were employed to cover distance as they could work without water for days together. Good horses generally were brought to India from Persia and Tartary and thus could not be put such 'drugeries'. The Indian breed of horses was not very 'fit for burthens'. Camels were of great use as it could travel several days without water. Baffalo, a more sluggish animal, was used for carrying water from 'tanques' to their houses or for drawing the carts.

Persons of quality had a stable of Persian horses for their riding. The East India Company kept a set of Persian horses for the use of their factors and servants in principal settlements in India.[78] Every amir had according to his mansab,10,8,5

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[77] Shafaat Ahmad Khan, John Marshall in India, being his Notes and Observations, Oxford University Press, London,1927,p.426.

[78] Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey (eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, pp. 52-54.

or 6 horses of several kinds as Persian, Arabian, Kachhi, etc. The Kachhi was the hollowed backed horse from Cutch and had, in Mundy's time, the reputation of being equal to the Arabian horse.

"In the northern mountanious of Hindustan, a kind of small but strong horses is bred, which are called gut, and in the confines of Bengal, near Kuch (Bihar) another kind of horses occurs, which rank between the gut and Turkish horses and are called tanghan they are strong and powerful".[79]

"This animal, the strong little pony of Bhutan and Tibet, reads like a description of the breed now famous all over Burma as Shan ponies".[80]

There used to be a daily 'fiar' or market in many big cities where horses, cattle and slaves were displayed and sold. The market for horses or cattle was known as 'Nakhas'.[81]

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[79] Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, tr. by H.Blochmann, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1873, p.133.
Akbar was very fond of horses as he considered them to be of great importance for the three branches of the goverment. Merchants would bring good horses from Arabia, Turkey, Badakshan, Shirwan, Qirghiz, Tibet and Kashmir, "Droves after droves arrived from Turan and Iran and Akbar had about 12 thousand horses in his stable." For the convenience of the merchants he had set apart a place for horse dealers, where they could sell their horses without any delay. Secondly, he appointed a person, who had a good knowledge about the horses as an Amin-i-Karwansara, who exclusively dealt with the purchase of horses. Under orders of the king, the payment of the horses was quickly made to the dealers., Ibid.

[80] Richard Carnac Temple & L.M.Anstey(eds.), Travels of Peter Mundy Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p.136n.

[81] Ibid., p.189 and 189n.

The great desire that existed in India for horses from Persia and Arabia is well known. It is evident from later references that the hope of a good supply of these valuable animals was the main motive of the concessions made to the English in India.[82]

It seemed to the English complete exemption from all manner of duties in the Golconda kingdom and only stipulated in return that royal officers should be allowed the first opportunity of purchasing whatever horses or curiosities the English or elsewhere might bring from Persia. Ina a letter mentioned by Thomas Rastell at Swally to the Company that they captured two ships of Portuguese carrying cocomuts and Arabian horses.[83] Even Mughal kings had a great lust for the Persian horses and were ready to give maximum trade concessions for the procurement of good Persian horses.

Throughout the 16th century, the horse supply had been a vital question for the armies of the Deccan kingdoms. The local ponies were useful for cavalry and imports from Arabia and Persia depended mainly on control of sea ports on the west coast and therefore, civilians were not allowed to keep horses fit for military work.[84]

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[82] W.H.Moreland(ed.), Relations of Golconda in the Early 17th Century, Hakluyt Society, London,1931,p.86n.

[83] William Foster(ed.),The English Factories in India,1634-36, Clarendon Press,Oxford,1911,Introduction, p.xxxiv.

[84] Ibid., p.61; W.H.Moreland(ed.),Relations of Golconda in the Early 17th Century, p.86n.

Camels

As mentioned earlier in sandy parts of the country like Rajasthan and in Multan, Camels were frequently used. The swiftest camels came from Ajmer while best in lifting burden were from Sindh. According to Ain-i-Akbari, camels came from Jodhpur, Nagor, Bikanar, Jaisalmir, Bhatinda, Bhatner, while in Sindh also the camels were found in abundance. Jama Maza and Lok were two important varities of camels. Ain has also given a vivid description of the varieties, nature, regulations and food administered to the camels. They were looked after very well. Akbar had even given names to the camels as Bughadi(male) and Jarmazah (female)

The use of camels in caravans was not popular on all routes but mostly from Surat to Agra, and in Sind and Bolcchistan they were in good demand.[85]

Palanquins

According to Herbert Moll, when a man of substance travelled, he usually hired eight or ten persons to carry his palanquin. It was usually well contrived with pillows, had an arch canopy over it, usually of scarlet cloth. It was spacious enough for a man to sit or lie in it. Two coolies in front and

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[85]Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, tr. H.Blochmann,pp.143-148.

two at the rear carried it on the shoulders at the speed of four or five miles an hour, with the provision of relievers at certain times without standing still. Besides these 8 or 10 coolies or '<u>charimen</u>' there were hired by well-to-do travellers an equal number of musketeers and pikemen to defend them against beasts or robbers. They charged the travellers only 3 pence per coolie. These coolies also helped 'the travellers or other persons sitting in it, in getting provisions from the nearby villages, firewood from the jungles, an earthern pot for half a penny for purposes of cooking their meals.[86]

The usual time for travelling was morning or evening. Noon was used for sleeping. In places infested with robbers, they (travellers) preferred to travel in caravans, in the company of 200 or 300 persons. They also used <u>hackeries</u> which were square like English coaches with pillows laid at the bottom to lean on, although without any raised seats to sit on. According to Bowery, a palanquin was of a long swuare frame about six feet long and 3½ feet broad. It was very neatly inlaid with ivory and turtle shell of excellent workmanship plated with silver(as the owner's pleasure is to bestow caste thereon) with a large bambool of about 15 to 16 feet long, crooked in middle for the convenience of of sitting upright or'may lie down and deep in it, with a scarlet

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[86]Herbert Moll, <u>The Present State of Proper India</u>, p.255.

or broad cloth called a pingaree stretched out square. This was carried out by four men atonce upon a journey'. The bearers could carry it upto 40 miles.[87]

Ain has given a description of the Palanquin bearers, according to which, "they carry heavy load on their shoulders and travel through mountains and velleys with their palkis, they walk so evenly that the man inside is not inconvenienced by any jolting. There are many in this country but the best came from Dakhin and Bengal. At Court, several thousands of them are kept. The pay of head bearer varies from 192 to 384 d, common bearers get from 12 to 160d."[88]

According to Tavernier, "Palanquin was meant for comfortable journey. It was (Palanquin) a kind of bed, 6 or 7 feet long and 3 feet wide with a small rial all around. A bamboo sustains the cover of the palki which was of a satin or brocade. Three persons carried it, if to make haste 12 men were to carry it. Only four rupees a month were paid, including everything." According to the author, "he who desires to travels with honour in India takes with him 20 or 30 armed men, with bows and arrows and muscats".[89] The finest palanquins of India were made at Thatta. It was well known for chariots and palanquins.[90]

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[87] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, Hakluyt Society, London, 1905, p.87.

[88] Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, translated by H. Blochmann, p. 254.

[89] V. Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol. I, pp. 45-46.

[90] Surinder Nath Sen(ed.), Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri, p. 75.

Coastal Transport

There was considerable inter-coastal trade activity in the 17th century. Trade through rivers, by boats or country made little ships was very convenient expeciallydu during monsoon season, when the roads were flooded with water or even washed away. Moreover, during inclement weather, travelling by boat along the rivers was the only convenient means of getting from place to place.

The advent on the Gugrat coast of Dutch and English vessels introduced an element of competition both in coastal and foreign trade. The Europeans took up the construction of their smaller crafts in the harbours on the western coast. On the other hand, Indian merchants benefitted by the new service which they found both cheaper and good. The efforts of the Dutch to outbid the English helped to maintain freight charges at low level and cargo space was generally avoidable in excess of the demand.[91]

By the middle of 17th century, the Surat became an important centre for ship building and ship repairing. The English Company had very successfully constructed and even re-fitted many damaged ships. According to Abbe Caree, the English factory at Surat sometimes hired ships for the voyages but in 1670-77,most of the voyages were conducted by vessels built or bought at Surat

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[91] M.S.Commissariat, History of Gujarat, Vol. II, Orient Longman, Bombay, 1957, pp.308-309.

and owned by Company for the defence of Bombay, their number being five.[92] A large number of the chiefs and other company's servants (as well) as private persons known as freemen) had their own ships for private trade; but records show many instances of such trade being excessive and highly prejudicial to the Company, ass well as of the misuse of money belonging to it, for private persons.[93]

In 1640, the English had a quite a small fleet of country built ships and frigates, the latter being manned by small guns. With these boats they conducted their coastal trade well and collected goods at the various small sea ports of Gujarat which were later transported to England in the larger vessels that came out yearly to Surat from Europe.[94]

An outstanding achievement of Shahjahan's admirality was the defeat and banishment of the Portuguese from Satgaon, Hugli in 1632. In this campaign many Portuguese war ships were captured by the Mughals.[95] After the expulsion of the Portuguese from Bengal, the Dutch and English started their trade activities there with greater vigour.

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[92]Charles Fawcett(ed.), The Travels of the Abbe Carre in India and the Near East, translated by Lady Fawcett, and Vol. I, Hakluyt Society, London, 1948, pp. 9.

[93]Ibid., p.159n.

[94]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1637-41, pp. 289, 243.

[95]H.Hosten(ed.), Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique, Vol. II, pp.323-325.

There was a brisk trade activity between Bengal and various parts of the country. Balasore, a district in Orissa had a regular trade with Bengal. It was also known as ship building and ship repairing centre with suitable dockyards. It developed further after the advent of the Europeans, particularly the English. In the thirtees, it was described as a sea town by Breton.

In 1634, the Governor of Balasore sold a small half furnished vessel of 100 tons to the East India Company. The English later on completed its construction, christened it Thomas and loaded it with commodities for despatch to the Bay.[96] Four year later, the Masulipatam factors sent Godfrey, Master of the coaster to proceed to Balasore for refitting the Thomas.

Another ship was also ordered by the East India Company to proceed to Balasore for refitting and was later to halt at Hariharpore for filling in the ration.[97]

Captain Durson repaired his ship Loyalty in August,1651 and showed the intentions of journeying to England. Durson's ship struck again in January 10,1652, while crossing the Bar of Balasore and had become a total wreck. Captain Durson, then

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[96]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1634-36,p.43.

[97]Ibid., 1637-41, p. 30.

entered into an agreement with the 'Moor of Balasore' and built a new vessel of 200 tons for the coastal trade, carrying English goods. In 1651, he repaired his damaged ship Loyality which was bound for Gombroon in Persia.[98] Blacke, had built three boats to carry goods between Balasore and Hugli. The boats which Blacke p repared or refitted last year were destroyed by the storm and the rest were used by the Nawab.[99]

According to Thomas Bowery, "Purgoo" was another type of boat which was mostly used between Hugli and Balasore. These boats were again made very strong in order to carry 'sufficient load'. They were also used for loading ships as they were constructed in such a way that they could remain in water for a long time without being damaged or destroyed.[100]

'Boora' was comparatively a 'lighter boat' which rowed with 29 or 30 oars. These boats were also used for carrying saltpetre and other commodities from Hugli downwards.[101]

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[98] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1651-54, pp. 47, 92,100.

[99] Ibid., 1661-64, p. 40.

[100] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal,p.288.

[101] Ibid., pp.228-229. ' A Budgaroo or pleasure boat was another variety wherein the English and Dutch chiefs and councils to in State upon the water also by the Moors Grandeed or Governors'. 'It was a Pleasure Boat' used by the Officers of the Mughal Empire, Ibid.,p. 228.

Ralph Fitch (1583-91) journeyed to Satgaon in Bengal from Agra with one hundred and forty boats, laden with different sorts of merchandize. At Satgaon he found a great assemblage of vessels. He also makes a mention of a peculiar type of boat known as Pericose, it had 24 to 26 oars and went from place to place to bring rice or other commodities.[102]

Peter Mundy saw (great boats' weighing between 300 to 500 tons, plying between Agra, Etawah, Allahabad, Patna and Dacca. These majestic boats often belonged to nobles who carried their families in them.[103] He has also testified the frequent plying of 'Boora boats', carrying timber and stones.[104]According to Bowery, "All the saltpetre is sent hence to Hugli in great flatt bottomed vessels of exceedinge strength, which are called Patellas, each of them will bringe downe, 4,5, 6000 Bengala maunds".[105]

"They are built very strange, by reason of the most impetuous addies, they meet within some places that force them many times upon one shoale or other".[106]

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[102]William Foster(ed.), The Early Travels in India, p. 18.

[103]Richard Carnac Temple & L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II,p.226

[104]Ibid., p.224.

[105]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal,p.225.

[106]Ibid.

"Many patellas came downe yearly laden with wheat and other graine, and goe up laden with salt and bees wax, the kings only commodities".[107]

Mussola or Mussoolah Boat

The surf boat used on the Coromandel coast, of capacious size, and formed of planks sewn together with coir-twine; the open joints being made good with a caulking or wadding of twisted coir. The origin of the word is very obscure. Layden thought, it was derived from "Masoula... the Maharashtra term for fish" (Morton's life of Layden, p. 64). It is possible that the name may be connected with Masulipatam where boats seem to have been in use (See John Fryer, A New Account of East India and Persia, Vol. I, p.26).

Mussoola

According to Bowery, "The boats they do laid and unlaid ships or vessels which are built very slight having no timbers in them, save thefts to hold their sides together. Their plan are very broad and thin, saved together with care, being flat bottomed and every way much deformed, as on the other side demonstrated. They are so slightly built for convenience sake and really are most suitable for the coast, for all along the shore, the sea runneth high and breakth, to which they do buckle and also to the ground

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[107] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal p.225.

when they strike. They are called Massools and are for little use save carrying, light goods (as bales of calicoes or silks not exceeding six or eight holes).[108]

About Cattamaren

"They seize 3, 5 or 6 large pieces of boyant timber together and this they call a cattamaren, upon which they can laid 3 or 4 ton of weight when they go on fishing they are ready with very small ones of the like kind that will carry but 4, 5, 200 one man only and upon these sad things they will boldly adventure (out of light of the shore, but indeed they swim as natural as Spanial dogs)."

"There is always a heavy sea there (San Thomse) from swell or storm, so the merchandize and passangers are transported from ship board to the town by certain boats which are seen with fine coards, and when they approach the beach, where sea breaks with great voilance, they wait till the perilous wave has passed and then, in the interval between one wave and the next, those boatmen pull with great force, and so run ashore; and being there overtaken by the waves they are carried still further up the beach. And the boats do not break, because they give to the wave and because the beach is covered with sand, and the boats stand

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[108]Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, pp.42-43.

up right on their bottoms".[109]

Dr. John Fryer, who travelled in Musoola in 1673 from Hugli to Patna has also given a good account of its 'structure and strength'. According to him, "I went ashore in a Mussoola, a boat where in ten men paddle, the two after most of whom are steersmen, using their paddles instead of a rudder.The boat is not strengthened with knee Timbers, as ours are, the bended planks are sowed together with rope-yarn of the cocoe, and calped with Dammar(a sort of Resin taken out of the sea) so artifically that it yields to every ambitious surf".[110]

In 1678, "three Englishmen drowned by upsetting of a Mussoola boat. The fourth on board saved with the help of Muckwar". Again, according to Hedge's diary, February 3,1685, "this morning two Mussoolas and two Cattamarans came off to ye shippe".[111]

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[109] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas BowarXs Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal,p.43 'Catamarans are nothing more than three or four little planks joined together and fastened securely like raft.There were some which were covered with a mat, and could carry little sail made of the back of trees with which they sailed very quickly. But when they wanted to row, the fisherman or the owner sat partly in the water rowing with his feet and also with a bar which had flat ends so that he got along very quickly', H.Yule & A.C. Burnell, Hobson-Jobson.A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Pharses, ed. by W.Crooke, Munshiram Manoharlal,Delhi, 1968, pp.602-03 (Reprint).

[110] John Fryer, A New Account of the East India and Persia,being Nine Years Travels,edited William Crooke,Hakluyt Society, London,Vol. I, 1909,p.37.

[111] H.Yule & A.C.Burnell, Hobson-Jobson.A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Pharses,ed. by W.Crooke, pp.602-03.

These boats were also used in the operation of loading ships, as they could also carry good amount of weight.[112] Ralph Fitch completed the voyage from Agra to Satgaon in five months while as he thought he could have completed it in 3 months.[113]

Water-borne traffic in Bengal was extraordinarily heavy. Manrique was highly impressed to see more than two thousand vessels at Rajmahal (Bengal). It took almost nine days for Manrique to complete the formalities necessary for his departure.[114] In Sindh, Lahri Bandar was also a busy port, according to Ain-i-Akbari, there were 40,000 large and small boats to be hired there. The sind merchants usually brought goods in Agra and transported them to Lahore or Multan on carts and from there to different places by the river. This cost them 3 rupees per maund. This was a better course than by sending the Agra goods via Ahmadabad and Burhanpur. The latter was more tedious and dangerous.[115]

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[112] William Crooke(ed.), Hobson-Jobson.A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Pharses, pp.602-03.

[113] William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India.p.24.

[114] H.Hostein(tr.), Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique,Vol.II,p.135.

[115] Akbar had maintained great interest in boats.There were strongly built boats fit enough to carry elephants and were also useful in wars. Experienced officers were appointed to look after ships,"as if they were houses and use them as excellent means of conquest", Ain makes a mention of ships of Bengal and Thatta, along ocean coasts,southcoast and westcoast large ships with suitable dockyards were constructed and even repaired for ocean voyages. Lahore and Allahabad were also important centres of ship building industry. Malabar provided the best sailors in India. In large ships, there were 12 sailors(Nakhudas) occupying different ranks.Ain also gives a description of the salaries of Nakhudas,Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari,tr. by H.Blochman,Vol.I, pp.389,290-292.

William Fremlin wrote to the Company on May 1, 1636 from Surat that in Sind most of the trade was done by barter 'for there is little money stiming'. By the end of February every year, very great 'flat bottomed boats, of 100 tons burden and upwards', came down from Lahore, laden with a number of commodities and bartered these with others. The profit was not less than 50 per cent. He was convinced that much expense would be saved to the company by bringing down their Agra goods via Lahore to Thatta instead by way of Burhampur or Ahmadabad. Moreover, at Laribunder the prices of articles were written down in a notewook and would not be altered according to the caprice of an unjust Governor as was the case with Mazhar-ul-Mulk, the Governor of Surat.[116]

Fremlin in reply of a letter written by President of East India Company on December 1636 at Surat advised them that they should have a factory in Sind for cloth for a year as a trial. He added further that their ships coming from Surat laden for Persia should 'take this place in their way and sett ashore such men and means' as would be though fit to be assigned for the employment. While returning from Persia to Surat they should pass through Sind port (Laribunder) and take from there 'such goods and provisions as shall be prepared'. He was hopeful that the commodities of Sind would yield 'competent' profit in Persia.[117]

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[116] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1634-36, pp.192,244.

[117] Ibid., pp.131-132.

With the coming of the Europeans and particularly the English, river traffic expanded considerably. Great and small vessels were seen transporting goods from one place to another. The English by 17th century succeeded in establishing their factories at the various coastal areas of the country and founded new places like Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. With the discovery of new coastal areas - the sea trade became more rapid.

Ovington was surprised to see the skill of the Indians in imitation in ship building, any model brought from any other country. Heir workmanship in this respect was wonderful. He made a prediction which came true later. He suggested that the timber used by Indians in building their ships should be used for the English men of war. He found it so strong as not to splinted even by the force of bullet. His prophecy came true. In the early years of the 19th century, Bombay attained faime for the line of battleships designed by the vetran Persi architect Jamshedji Bomanji, whose two masterpieces, the gun vessels, the Ganges and the Asia made of teak were 50 per cent cheaper than the English vessels, and as Ovington remarked that Indian teak stood better than the English Oak.[118]

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[118] John Ovington, A Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689, Edited by H.G.Rawlinson, London, 1929, p.116.

According to Mundy there was another country vessel termed as Junk, some of them 1,000 or 1,200 tonnes each with one deck. They were put to sea with the easterly winds. Having main sails put for the purpose they were confident of the continuance of fair and moderate winds and weather during that period.[119]

According to Manrique, Porca was a rowing boat that he used at Hijli. It was a common thing in those parts. There were many persons in the boat besides rowers. Dingi was a small boat or a skiff, commonly known as 'dug-out' made from a single trunk. Baloon or Balloon - a rowing vessel formerly used in many parts of the Indies.[120]

Boats between Etawa and Agra

Peter Mundy, who saw boats on August 12,1632 at Jamuna, known as (barges). They were very light and mostly rowed between Agra dnd Etawa, and from there down to the Jamuna into the Ganges, from there to Patna and to Bengal. They were usually laden with salt digged out of the mountains. Such boats were usually 300 or 400 tons a piece, both sides being extraordinarily high.They went down in a very short time but on return journey took five

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[119] H.Hosten(tr.), Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique, Vol.II, p.24.

[120] Ibid.

times as long. During rainy season they started when the rivers were full and the current swift. All the way as Mundy came, it was very pleasant and the plain was full of grain.[121]

Serais

Different countries have different ways of catering to the traveller's needs. The lack of inns in India was a subject of common complaint among the travellers from the west. Nicholas Downton says that "they have not the use of innes, as in 'Christendome' and travellers had to lodge in serais instead".[122]

Terry elaborates the inconveniences in more explicit terms. "In this kingdom there are no innes to entertaine. Onely in great townes and cities are faire houses built for their receit (which they call sarray) not inhabitited, where any passangers may have room freely, but must bringe with him his bedding, his cooke, and other necessaries wherein to dresse his mete, which are usually carried on camels, or else in carts drawne with oxen, wherein they have tents to pitch when they meete with no serras".[123]

Mandelslo also found that "there were no common inns in all the kingdom of Guzuratte, nor indeed in all the Mogul's country, but instead thereof in cities, as also in some villages,

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[121] Richard Carnac Temple & L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Eurpe and Asia, Vol. II, pp.87-88.

[122] William Foster(ed.),The Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies, p. 139.

[123] William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India, p. 311.

there are certain public buildings, called serai, built by some persons out of charity, for the convenience of strangers and travellers, who were forced to lie in open air. These are the caravan serais, which have only the four walls, and a covering overhead, so that to be accommodated therein, a man must bring alongwith him waht is not be had there".[124]

But all serais were not of this type, according to Nicholas Withington, "Between Adgemere (Ajmer) and Agra", he says, "at every ten course (which is an ordinarye days journey) there is a seralia or place of loding boothe for man and horse, and hostesses to dresse our vistuals if we please, paying a matter of 3d both for horse and meat dressinge".[125]

According to Tavernier, "The word signifies a great enclosure of walls or hedges within which 50 or 60 thatched huts are arranged all round. Here there are some men and women, who sell flour, rice and butter, and vegetables who make it their business to prepare bread and cook rice. If by chance a Musalman arrives, he goes into the village to seek for a piece of mutton or a fowl, when these supply the food to the traveller, clean out for him and the room which he wishes to occupy, and they place in it a small bed of girths, upon which he spreads the mattress which he carries with him on his journey".[126]

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[124] M.S.Commissariat, Mandelslo's Travels in Western India.p.20.

[125] William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India, p.225.

[126] V.Ball(tr.),Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India,Vol.I, p.45.

According to Manrique most of the caravan sarais or 'Carmossoras' were located on high roads frequented by travellers. They were sometimes erected by neighbouring villages, princes or some influential people who erected them in order to keep their memory green. Sometimes it was constructed due to 'Consciousness' of a wealthy person who wanted to satisfy it through some work of piety.

These sarais were built in a square, like cloisters in a monastry and were divided up into dwelling rooms and chambers, with a male or a female regent, for women could also carry on in this occupation. These attendants were called respectively metres and materanis (Scawangers). Their business was to keep these rooms clean and provide them with cots but without beddings, which travellers in these regions almost carry with them.

These servants were also entrusted with the preparation of the food for guests, as well as doing all their duties essential to comfort within the house, even to provide hot water for washing feet. However, on reaching a 'Caramossora' all that one has to do is to send out and purchase food in the Bazar and leave other matters to these attentive servants. Besides these duties, if the guests have horses, they are also required to cook mung or chick pea for horses. Throughout the greater part of the Mughal Empire, especially in Bengal, they feed the horses a kind of vegetables which was very nurshing and good. The metras and meterainі(sweepers and sweeperessà were stewards

of these inns or 'Caramossoras'. They were very obliging and felt contended with one copper coin or the most two. Manrique compares them with the stable men and inn keepers of Europe, who were 'wicked and robbed of their substance of the poor travellers who fell into their hands'. "Thus, uncivilized and heathen they surpass over stable men and innkeepers of Europe who being Christians, are under some obligation to be most moderate in all things, outwardly and invardly. But many of them do exactly the reverse".[127]

Mehtrains and Bhativaris were women in all the serais in India who looked after the means of the servants. This statement of Peter Mundy may not be correct as very few people could take meals prepared by the Mehtrani and belonged to the lowest class. They looked after two or three rooms and were paid by the lodgers one pice or two in the morning. They lived in the rooms with their husbands and children. Their husbands were usually Kahars, fowlers or fishers, which again does not seem to be a correct statement. Mundy records that occasionally it was a sport to the travellers to see these ladies to fall out among themselves

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127 H.Hosten(tr.), Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique, Vol. II, pp.100-102.According to the Editor,these servants belonged to Bhoi or Kahar caste, who act as domestics to Hindus.They no doubt swept the rooms and on that account Manrique confused them with scavengers. The Bhatiari cooked and Kahar brought water.Probably, all were separately in attendance on travellers, Ibid., p.100n.

about ' a chipp or a peace of pott', scolding or railing for 5 or 6 hours at a stretch. And when the mothers got weary, their daughters took their part and then the husbands. "Soe taking turnes, using the most beastliest and revileigne terms they can invent, ripping uppone anothers faults in publique; and shee that over comes is not a little prowed and joyfull, as the other is vexed".[128]

According to Peter Mundy, from Agra to Alam-ki-Sarai on way to Patna, the entire area were fertole, plain well cultivated and o inhabited, with good accommodation for travellers, having many serais and tanks of water all the way.[129]

Mundy writes that as in Turkey, so in India,"there was noe manner of accommodation, but that what the carry with you, only sometimes you have saraes or canes on the ways".

Zafar Khan's serai in Patna was the fairest in India, according to Peter Mundy. When he saw it in 1632, it was not completely constructed. It was situated on the river bank, had two fair courts, each having warehouses 'round about beneath, and rooms with galleries to lodge in a loft, a very stately entrance'. This serai was mainly for merchants of strange

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[128] Richard Carnac Temple & L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p.24. Serai and Khan, a building for the accommodation of travellers with their pack of animals, See Hobson-Jobson, Kan and Serai.

[129] Ibid.

countries as 'Mongolls, Persians, Armerians', who were allowed to stay and keep their belongings there on payment of charges 'by the moneth'. These serais were in great cities. The other sorts of serais were in all places, serving for all sorts of travellers who came to stay there only for the night. The serai was built by Saif Khan, the former Governor of the place, with a fair mosque adjoining it. He had also started building a fair garden on the other side of the river.[130]

Peter Mundy, while returning from Surat in 1633 to Agra, stayed at Hasanpur which had fair, strongly built and 'well contrived' serai of brick, by which ran the river Asa. It was situated in the province of Malwa which was known for its fertility and during these days, 'never failed of abundance' and from where other provinces of India supplied in times of scarcity. Peter Mundy and his party stayed there a little while and enjoyed themselves with the site of serai, the flowing river and the fertile country round about where they did not find even 'one spott of untilled ground'. They saw the fish playing and leaping in the clear water of the river.[131]

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[130] Richard Carnac Temple & L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p. 159.

[131] Ibid., p. 57.

On August 6, 1632, Peter Mundy departed from the English House, situated in Phal Hatti, fruit and vegetable market in the city of Agra, crossed over the river and came to Nur Mahal-ki-Serai, at a distance of one kos. It was so named after the queen of Jahangir.[132] Peter Mundy tells us that the serai was built for the convenience of the travellers. It could accommodate 3,000 persons and 500 horses. The serai was built of stone without the use of any timber there. All the rooms had arches, each with a 'several cupola'. It was surrounded by two gardens, which were also built by her. According to Mr. Temple, one of these gardens, Moti Bagh and second represents the site of Nawal or Nawab Gang. The first was built by Nur Jahan and the other in the reign of Shah Jahan.[133]

On August 17, Peter Mundy was at Shanker-ki-serai and two kos before they came to this place, they had passed through Chaparghata on their way to Patna. There they found the 'fairest and formalest' serai they had yet seen. It had four towners at

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[132] According to Richard Carnac Temple, it was built by Jahangir in the district now known as Nurmahal. A portion of the building is there even now and gateway was restored and repaired in 1882. Richard Carnac Temple and L.M. Anstey, (eds.), Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol.II, p. 78n.

[133] Ibid., pp. 78-79.

the four corners, with two stately gates, with a very high wall around it, full of battlements. A river ran by it and had a stone bridge over it.[134]

Finch in 1611 says at 'Chapperghat... is one of the fairest serais in India, liker a goodly castle than an inne to lodge strangers... neere to it is a fair bridge both built by one man'.[135]

De Laet remarks 'Chapperghat here there is such a splendid saray that it looks like a fortress rather than a hostelry'.[136]

Peter Mundy during his journey from Agra to Surat in 1633, found a scarcity of serais in Rajputana.[137] Again from Agra to Ahmadabad, Mundy found the country a desert, 'barren and thievish', without any serais, meat or drink.[138]

Mundy found a serai at Nandurbar, 12 kos from Baroda. According to Mundy, Indians spent a lot of money in building tah tanks, gardens, serais and baolis during their life time. If, after the death of the founder, they fell into ruins, no one took care of these.[139]

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[134] Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol. II, p.89.

[135] Samual Purchas, Purchas, His Pilgrims, James Maclehose, Glasgow, 1905, Vol. IV, pp.68-69.

[136] De Laet's, The Empire of the Great Mogul, p.89.

[137] Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, Vol.II, p.248.

[138] Ibid., p. 264.

[139] Ibid., p. 45.

Mundy mentioned about sweepers, who cleaned the inns and were known as Halalkhors. They were a "kinde of base,abject and contemned people or caste, most commonlie put to emptic howses of office, which goe not with vault as ours, only in some place are certain high stepps one by another on which they sett their feete and ease themselves, which is by and by carried by Hollalcores, soe that there is seldome any ill savour in their howses of office". These people also brought up the dogs of great-men as they were regarded as unclean. They also acted as execut-ioners. They ate all kinds of carrion, as horses, cattle,dogs, cats, etc. "Any man that touches any of them thincks himself polluted, so vilely are they accounted. Yet are they in all great mens howses for the use aforesaid".[140]

According to Tavernier, Halalkhors was a particular caste engaged in cleaning houses and were paid the monthly salaries.He further remarked, "As this caste of Halalkhors is only occupied in removing the refuse from houses, it gets the remains of what the others eat,of whatever caste they may be, and it does not make any any scruple about eating indifferently of all things". They carry the 'sweepings' from the houses to the fields on donkeys, The animal was looked upon with great contempt

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[140] Richard Carnac Temple and L.M.Anstey(eds.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,Vol. II, p. 248.

by Indians. These people also feed pigs as no body else would eat its meat.[141]

Manucci has also given a good information regarding serais in the realm of Mughols. According to him they were fortified places, built of stone or brick, having very strong gates. In every serai, there was an official whose duty was to close the gate in the evening. After he had shut the gates, he would warn every body to look after their belongings.[142]

From Rajmahal to Patna, Allahabad and Agra, "the routes I taversed are much frequented, full of villages and serais, food being good and cheap."[143]

According to Manrique - the city of Balasore in Orissa had an excellent caravan serai of moderate size, containing 33 rooms. The traveller alongwith the others stayed there which were rest houses designed for travellers not only in these parts of Bengal but also in Hindustan and throughout the Mogul Empire.[144]

At the city of Narangor, they stayed in a caravan serai having good clean rooms. At Burdwan, they stayed in a caravan serai especially meant for the travellers.[145]

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[141] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.II, p.186.

[142] William Irvine(tr.), Nicolao's Manucci's Storia Do Magor, John Murray, London, Vol.I, 1907-08, p.68.

[143] William Irvine(tr.), Peny's in Mughal India, John Murry, London, 1913, p. 34.

[144] H.Hosten (tr.), Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique, Vol.II, p.99.

[145] Ibid., pp.109, 146.

At Agra, there was a caravan serai of the Armenians, there were 90 other caravan serais in the city.[146] From Agra to Lahore, the towns and large villages, situated along the road, were all well and plentifully supplied with provisions and good serais. Some of them were handsomely built, in which sometimes one could not find rooms as it was usually pre-occupied due to the great stream of passangers. Moreover, this route(Agra to Lahore) being more popular owing to the presence of Court at Lahore, the serais were mostly stuffed with travellers and merchants.[147]

Serais at Surat

According to John Ovington, in the middle of Surat was built a noble and spacious caravan serai or inn, for the convenience of merchants who were strangers and could spent night comfortably. For there were no public houses for the entertainment of guests or travellers - "lest the jealousies of the husbands should be raised concerning their wives and daughters by the frequency of such temptations. And upon this account, all men whose affairs call them into country, either take care of providing their own victuals, or commit that charge to their peons and attendants to make it ready for them at their resting places by day, in the fields where they sleep at night".[148]

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[146] H.Hosten(tr.), Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique,Vol.II,p.152.

[147] Ibid., p. 184.

[148] H.G.Rawlinson(ed.), John Ovington's Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689, p. 189.

According to Abbe Caree, there were two serais in Surat maintained by Persian and Turkish merchants and other by Tartar King of Kashgar.[149]

In Surat, Moll found large buildings called caravan serais, where travellers could sleep and prepare their own meals. These serais were found at proper distances, on all the great roads. Near them was usually a 'tanqua' or a reservatory of water.[150] Pietro Della Valle while visiting Ahmadabad from Surat along with other members went to a house in a street called as'Terji Caravan Saris' or tailor's inn. The inns in Ahmadabad and other great cities of India were 'whole great streets of the city destinated for strangers to dwelling or whosoever wanted to hire a house'. These 'streets' were locked up during the night for the security of persons and their goods.[151]

According to Herbet Moll, there were 'choulteries or caravans serais' on the great roads of the country at a distance of 10 to 12 miles. They were open on the side of the road and generally consisted of two rooms, one for the travellers to

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[149] Charles Fawcett(ed.), The Travels of the Abbe Caree in India and the Near East, Hakluyt Society, London, 1947-48, pp. 195-96.

[150] Herbert Moll, The Present State of Proper India, p. 246.

[151] Edward Grey(ed.), The Travels of Pietro Della Valle into India, p. 50.

sleep in and other for cooking their meals. These serais were regarded as houses for travellers to refresh themselves in. To build a serai for the comfort and lodging of the travellers was looked upon as the greatest act of charity in India. Some good people in the neighbouring villages deemed their duty to see the fire was provided for cooking the meals for the travellers. Near every serai there used to be a tank full of water. The persons staying in serais were looked after very well and a great attention was paid to them.[152]

De Laet was somewhat critical about mismanagement of the serais. According to him "there were no serais where 'board' was supplied to travellers but in larger cities and towns there were buildings known as serais, not inhabited, but in which travellers could obtain accommodation though it was necessary to supply one's own furniture, beds or cooks"[153]

A serai in Masaulipatam was located at a distance of 10 to 12 miles and 'first come first served' was the principal motto of the working of serais. Once a traveller occupied a room, none could turn him out whatever the reason might be.[154]

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[152] Herbert Moll, The Present State of Proper India, p. 49.

[153] De Laet's The Empire of the Great Mogul, tr.by J.S.Hoyland and annotated by S.N.Banerjee, pp. 81-82.

[154] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowrey's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.110.

Baldaeus, a Dutch traveller has also testified the abundance of serais at Masulipatam especially designed for traveller's stay, comfort and safety.[155]

According to Bernier, "Even the best equipped serai compared but ill with the village inns of Europe where a traveller could expect a comfortable, a cherry fire, a jug of water and a roast joint of meat." Bernier further complained that "the Eastern Karavan serras neseble large barns, raised and paved all round, in the same manner as our Pontneuf. Hundreds of human beings seen in them, mingled with their horses,mules and camels. In summer, these buildings are hot and suffocating and in winter nothing but the breadth of so many animals prevents the inmates from dying so cold".[156]

The picture is undoubtedly overdrawn for the good French man, was expecting to see the type of inns, which he saw between Paris and Lyons, and keeping in view the insecurity of roads due to robbers,inclemencies of weather and tedious journey,serais certainly provided much needed respite and granted security to the travellers or merchants.

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[155] Phillip Baldaues, A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, John Churchill, London, 1703, p. 403.

[156] Archibald Constable, (tr.), Francois Bernier's Travels in the Mogul Empire, p. 233.

CHAPTER X

TRADE AUXILIARIES: CURRENCY, BANKING AND HUNDIES

Currency

The foundation of a systematic currency was laid by Sher Shah whose "reign constitutes an important test point in the annals of Indian coinage, not only in its specific merit reforms, but also as correcting the progressive deteriorations of the previous kings, and as introducing many of these reforms which the succeeding Mughals claimed as their own".[1] Sher Shah is entitled to the honour of establishing the reformed system of currency, which lasted throughout the Mughal period, was maintained by the East India Company down to 1835, and is the basis of the existing British currency. He abolished the bullion coinage of mixed metal, and struck well-executed pieces of gold, silver and copper, to a fixed standard of both weight and fineness. His silver rupee, which weight 180 grains, and contained

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[1] Edward Thomas, The Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi, Trubner & Co., London, 1871, p. 403.

175 grains of pure silver, being thus practically equal in the value to the modern rupee.[2] Sher Shah's coins were both square and circular in shape. Gold coins of pure metal weighing 167 grs., 168.5 grs. and 166.4 grs., half rupee of 88 grs. and copper dams varying in weight between 311 grs and 322 grs. have been found.[3] Thomas, remarked that the dam had originally an international standard of 323.5 grs. The rate of exchange between copper and silver was 64 to 1.[4] The inscription of the coins was bi-lingual, the kings name being written both in Persian and Nagari.[5]

With this background, Mughals were able to establish a currency of very high metallic standard and uniformity throughout their vast empire.[6] They coined gold, silver and copper. The gold coins were almost cent per cent pure, while in the silver coins, the proportion of the allow never rose above 4 per cent.[7]

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[2]William Wilson Hunter, The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. II, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1907-08, pp.45-46.

[3]Kalikaranjan Qanungo, Sher Shah, Kar Majumdar & Co., Calcutta, 1921, pp. 382-84.

[4]Edward Thomas, Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi, p.404.

[5]The name of the King was variously spelt of Sri Ser Sahi; Sri Sar Sah, Sri Siri Sah, See, K.R.Qanungo, Sher Shah, p. 385n.

[6]Irfan M.Habib, "Currency System of the Mughal Empire", Medieval Indian Quarterly, Aligarh Muslim University, Vol. IV, 1961, p.1.

[7]S.H.Hodivala, Historical Studies in Mughal Numismatics, Calcutta, 1923, pp.235-44.

According to Tavernier, "there is a mint in each of the frontier town, where any amount of gold or silver is refined to the highest standard and is coined into the money of the country".[8] Even the English Factory Records and European travellers bear eloquent testimony of changing of the foreign currency into the currency of the country as there was mint at every coastal town.[9]

Under the Mughals, the currency consisted mainly of rupee*, which was destined to enjoy the position of a basic unit

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[8] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India. Macmill, London, Vol. I, 1889,p.9.

[9] Ibid.; Herbert Moll,and other travellers have also made a mention of the coastal mints.

*In Hindi, it was known as rupiya,derived from Sanskrit word rupaya, 'wrought silver'. It was a standard coin of the Anglo-Indian monetary system. It is commonly believed that it was introduced by Sher Shah in 1542. But it is also true that a coin substantially identical with the rupee, i.e. approximately to a standard of 100 ratis or (175 grains) of silver, an ancient Hindu standard had been struck by the Muslim Sovereigns of Delhi in 13th and 14th centuries. The capital coins from the time of Iltutmish (1211-36) to the accession of Mohd. Tuglaq(1325) were gold and silver pieces respectively of 175 grains. Ibn Batuta and his contemporaries believed that the gold coin was known by the name of tanga and sometimes gold dinar was worth 10 of the silver coin,which he calls dinar, thus,indicating that the relation of gold to silver value was 10:1. Mohd. Tuglaq remodelled the currency,issuing gold pieces of 200 grains and silver pieces of 140 grs., an indication probably of a great 'depreciation of gold' but the real reform in currency was undertaken by the orders of Sher Shah as mentioned above. See A.C.Burnell and Henry Yule,(eds.), Hobson-Jobsons, A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, 2nd ed., Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi,1968,pp.774-775.

of currency. It (rupee) was used for all kinds of transactions. Throughout Akbar's reign, it was maintained at the same uniform standard and weight, to be 11½ mashes or about 178 grains in which alloy was never allowed to rise above 4 per cent. Akbar's successors continued mintage of this coin, with certain short lived additional issues of heavier rupees by Jahangir.[10] Jahangir raised the weight of the rupee by 20 per cent on his accession. He instituted a new weight for the silver coins whereby the new rupya-i-Jahangir was supposed to weight exactly one tola. Shah-Jahan retained its weight and the size of that of Jahangir, while Aurangzeb raised the weight of rupee to 180 grains.[11]

Jahangir subsequently, ordered thatsilver coins of 100 tolas, 50 tolas, 20 tolas and 5 tolas be coined and called them by separate names.[12] About the beginning of his 4th regnal year, he ordered the other rupee by name of Sawai, which was 25 per cent more than Akbar's weight. But during the 6th year of his reign, it was withdrawn due to the inconvenience shown by people in handling it. He restored rupee which was officially regarded as weighing 10 mashas.[13]

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[10] Tapan Ray Chaudhuri & Irfan Habib (eds.), The Cambridge Economic History of India, Orient, Cambridge, 1982, pp.360-61
Akbar deserves high credit for the excellence of his extremely varied coinage, as regards purity of metal, fullness of weight and artistic execution. The Mughal coinage when compared with that of Queen Elizabeth or other contemporary rulers of Europe must be pronounced far superior on the whole. Akbar and his successors seem never to have yielded to the temptation of debasing coinage in either weight or purity. The gold in many of Akbar's coins is believed to be practically pure, Vincent A. Smith, Akbar the Great Mogul, S. Chand & Co., Delhi, 1966, p.112.

[11] Irfan Habib, "Currency System of the Mughal Empire", Medieval Indian Quarterly, Vol. IV, 1961, p.2

[12] Rogers and Beveridge (trs.), Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1909, pp.10-11.

[13] Ibid.

The other aspect of the Mughal currency was the depreciation in the value of the older rupee. There were two to three factors responsible for it.[14] Firstly, the Mughals did not realize their seigniorage and minting charges by mixing alloy in the coin but made a separate change on those who wanted to convert their bullion in specie.[15] From Abul Fazl's statement, it appears that in the case of the rupee the total charge amounted to 5.6 per cent of the net amount coined, and it remained the same throughout the period.[16] Besides the fact of age, the less of weight from wear was a separate factor for which rates of discount were set by the government as well as the market.[17]

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[14] Irfan Habib, "Currency System of the Mughal Empire", Medieval Indian Quarterly, Vol.IV,p.3.

[15] Ibid. Pelsaert however, gives a graphic description of Jahangir's coins in the following manner."The coins used are rupees but
16 there are different coins viz., Khazana or Akbar's old coins, the Chalani(current) which were the rupees struck during the reign of Jahangir in Agra, Lahore, Patna, Qandhar and Gujrat. The Shroffs value Chalani at 1 to 2 per cent above the Khazana. All bargains are done in terms of the same series of the coins either Akbari or Jehangir." See P.Geyl and W.H.Moreland(trs.), The Remonstrantie of Francois Pelsaert,Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delli, Delhi, 1972, p.29.

[16] Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.I, tr. by H.Blochmann,Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal,Calcutta,1927,pp.32-33. A merchant bringing bullion for coining Rs.1006,would obtain Rs.953,plus 21 dams & 10½ Jitls net from the mint. The charges amounted to Rs.50 and the dams and the rest of the charges would be considered labour and material employed for minting bullion, Ibid., p.38.

"One Rupee buys 1t. o.m. 2s of pure silver, hence for 950 rupees, the merchant gets 969t 9m 4s. Out of this quantity 5t 0.m 4¾ s. turn away in casting ignots.The remainder yields 1006 rupees and a surplus of silver worth 27½ dams". Ibid., p.38.

[17] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East, Sampson Low,London,1900,Vol.III, p.87.

Value of Rupee by the Foreigners

In 1615, the English factors wrote from Surat that "Roupe of Janger's (Jahangiri) of 100 pisas with which goeth four for five ordinary roupies of 80 pisas called cassane (Khazana) and we value them at 2s. 4d. per piece. Cecaus(Sikka) of Amadavars which goeth for 86 pisas; challenmes(Chalani or current rupees) of Agra, which goeth for 83 pisas".[18] Thus, we see that the rate of exchange slightly varied from place to place. According to Edward Terry, "They call the peeces of money roopees of which there are some of divers values, the meanest worth two shillings and nine pence sterling".[19] According to Joseph Salbank, a factor of the East India Company, who wrote on November 1616 from Agra to the Company remarked, "This maoney, consisting of the two shelling pieecs of this country called Roopeas"[20] According to Van Twist, a Dutch factor, the value of rupee was "4 and twenty holland stuyvers"[21]. Bernier remarked in 1666 about the rupee prevelent in Bengal: "And for Roupy (in Bengal) which is

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[18] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East, Vol.III, 87.

[19] William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India, S.Chand & Co., Delhi, 1968, p.302.

[20] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East, Vol. IV, p.229.

[21] W.H.Moreland, "Van Twists Mission", Journal of Indian History, Vol.XVI, 1972, p.72.

about half a crown, you may have 20 good pullets and more, Geese and Ducks in proportion".[22] Therefore, it is apparent that the purchasing power of rupee varied from state to state - though rupee remained an important coin, the other gold coin issued was known by the a name of Muhr or Ashrafi, of 169 grains troy, this seems to have been used mainly for hoarding purposes.[23] It was also given as presents to influential persons in order to extort certain concessions. The coin was of unalloyed metal. It therefore, never entered into financial records or accounts of administration. According to Ain-i-Akbari, it weighed 11 mashas and the heaviest was of 169 grains and value was 360 dams.[24] No further change seem to have been effected during Akbar's reign except perhaps the restoration of Akbar's bullion weight for the gold Muhr also.[25] Jahangir made a specific mention of his gold coins. He says, "To each (gold coin) I give a separate name, viz., to the Mohurs of 100 tolas that of Nurshahi, 50 tola Nursultan; 20 tola Nir Daulat, 10 tola Nur-Karam; 5 tola Nur Mihar; to one tola Nur-Jehani, the half of this I called Nurani and the Quarter Rawagi".[26]

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[22] Archibald Constable(tr.), Francois Bernier's Travels in the Mughal Empire, p.438.

[23] Irfan Habib and Tapan Ray Chaudhuri, The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. II, p.360.

[24] Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, tr. by H.Blochmann, Vol. I, p.32.

[25] Irfan Habib, "Currency System of the Mughal Empire", Medieval Indian Quarterly, Vol. IV, p.10.

[26] Alexander Rogers and Henry Beveridge, (Trs.), Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 5.

Silver Coins

The rupee and its fractional pieces were the standard silver coins current throughout the empire, though coins inherited from the previous regimes, contamued in circulation in certain regions and the royal mints made no mention of them. Thus, in Kashmir, an indigenous currency system was in use, based upon a coarse silver coin of 9 mashas, called the Rup Sansu, which was ¼ of the Akbari rupee in value.[27] Malwa had Muzaffaris, equal to a little above half a rupee; Berar had silver tanka worth 16 dams of 2/5 rupee; and in Khandesh the tanka had also originally the same value but after his victory of Asirgarh, Akbar raised the amount of assessed revenue of Khandesh by 50 per cent so that the value of coin rose to 24 dams.[28] Another silver coin which was current at Gujrat and particularly at Surat was Mahmudi. It was named afterthe Sultan of Gujrat and extensively current in Western India. It contimued to be minted during the 16th and 17th century by the Chief of Baglana and Nawanagar.[29] In 1615, its rate of exchange was equal to 12d. The value of Mahmudi changed with the change in the value of copper.[30] Edward Terry calls it about twelve

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[27] Irfan Habib, "Currency System of the Mughal Empire", Medieval Indian Quarterly, Vol. IV,p.7.

[28] Ibid., p. 8.

[29] S.H.Hodivala, Historical Studies in Mughal Numismatics,pp.115-130.

[30] William Foster(ed.), The Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies, Hakluyt Society, London, 1939, p. 203.

pence sterling and Peyton says, it equalled 30 pice or 33½ pice which were equivalent to one shilling.[31] According to the other estimate, it was a silver coin, first mentioned in the reign of Sultan Mahmud I Begra (1458-1511) which remained in use in Gujrat for several centuries. The weight and value underwent frequent changes but it would roughly be placed at equivalent to half a rupee.[32] Fryer gives its exchange value at somewhat less than an English shilling. He further adds that "2½ mahmudis is reckoned a rupee. Yet to change mahmoodies into rupees there is sometimes given 3 mahmudies".[33] V.Ball, suggested that its exchange value fluctuated from 8d to 1 s.[34] According to Pelsaert formerly Mahmudis and not rupees were current at Surat. It was a smaller coin and worth 10 strivesby our reckoning, rupees came into circulation during the last five or six years; the mahmudi was still the nominal unit for sales and purchases,but the actual payment was generally made in rupees,which we take as 24 strives. The king had a mint at Surat, Ahmadabad and all other capital cities.[35] There were other currencies current in Surat but every

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[31] William Foster(ed.), Early Travels in India,S.Chand & Co.,Delhi, 1968,p.77n (Reprint).

[32] M.S.Commissariot(tr.), Mandelslo(s Travels in Westarn India, Oxford University Press,London,1931,p.135n.

[33] William Crooke(ed.), A New Account of East India and Persia, being Nine Years Travels, Vol. II, Hakluyt Society,London,1909, pp.125,132.

[34] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India,Vol.I, p.125n.

[35] P.Geyl and W.H.Moreland(eds.), The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert,p.42.

one had its price in mahmudi, whether gold or silver of which there were many sorts brought by merchants of other countries:

1 Mahmudi	=	11d.
5 Mahmudi	=	1 rial.
1 Mahmudi	=	32 paissa
1 Paissa	=	30 almonds.[36]

Thus, the rate of exchange of Mahmudi was however, subject to fluctuations. The normal rate was 5 mahmudis for 2 rupees. This rate was maintained in English factory accounts after 1650, though the value of Mahmudi increased and we find the normal rate was 1 to 4. This rise was recognised by the English Company after 1651 when the rates for adjustment were fixed at 2s. 3d. for the rupee and 1 shilling for Mahmudi, making the mahmudi 4/9 of the rupee.[37] Thus, in the beginning of 17th century, its value from 2/5 of a rupee increased due to scarcity to about 4/9 of the rupee.[38]

A letter written by the servants of the English East India Company from Ahmadabad to the Company in 1620 reveals an interesting fact that as many as 1,015,000 Mahmudis were available with the English factors at Ahmadabad and other places.[39] Taking

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[36] Charles Danvers(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East, Vol. I, pp.34,141.

[37] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1651-54, Clarendon Press, Oxford,1914,p.58.

[38] The new value is first noticed in 1636. The English Factories 1634-36,p.224. The Dutch raised its rate in their accounts to 10 2/3 stivers but its actual rate seemed to be 2¼,Ibid,1637-41, p.91.

[39] Ibid., 1618-21, p. 178.

one mahmudi as being equal to one shilling, the figure works out to be £ 50,000 and this was not an isolated example by the Europeans. Again in 1618, Company spent 12,120 mahmudis which was little over £ 606.[40]

Thus, Mahmudi was quite a popular coin current in Gujrat. It was a rather coarse coin, with an alloy of more than 13 per cent.[41] Its value in 17th century was about 2/5 of a rupee or little above copper coins.

Copper Coins

Copper coins were important because of their considerable circulation. Dam* was the basic unit which too like rupee appears to have originated from Sher Shah.[42] The Ain-i-Akbari gives its

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[40] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21,p.52.

[41] Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari,tr. by H.Blochmann,Vol.I,p.19.

[42] The copper dams varying in weight between 311 grains and 322 grains were found in Sher Shah's time,Kalikaranjan Qanungo, Sher Shah,p.38.According to Thomas, Dam had originally an international standard of 323.5 grs.The exchange rates between copper and silver was 64 to 1, E.Thomas, The Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi, p.398.

*Dam originally an actual copper coin in Akbar's time. It weighs 5 tankas i.e. 10 tola 8 mashas and 7 surkhs, it is 40th part of a rupee. At first this coin was called Paisah,and also Bahloli, on one side the place is given where it was struck,on the other the weight. For the purpose of calculations, the dam was divided into 25 parts each of which was called a jital. The adhelah was half of a dam. The Paulah was a quarter of a dam. The damri was an eighth of a dam, Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, translated by H.Blochmann, Vol. I, Aadish Book Depot, Delhi,19 ,p.32n.

weight as $20\frac{7}{8}$ mashas and the heaviest of Akbar's extant dams rose to the weight of 323 grains.[43] This weight was retained by both Jahangir and Shah Jahan while Aurangzeb changed it after a few years of his early reign, as he faced considerable scarcity of copper which forced him to issue 1/3 lighter than the old. The market rate of Dam in the Ain-i-Akbari was 40 dams = 1 rupee.[44] But due to sudden hike in the prices of copper, the dam value of rupee was considerably reduced.[45] According to the testimony of Moreland, copper metal was very expensive in the north while the wouth was furnished mainly by the supplies imported by the Portuguese from Japan. The official rate of exchange in Akbar's time was 40 dam; 80 Gujrat pice for a rupee, equivalent to 32 pice for a Mahmudi; in 1609 Finch put the current rate for Mahmudi at 31 or 32 pice,"varying as copper riseth and falleth".[46]

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[43] According to Abul Fazl"1044 dams buy one man of copper i.e. at the rate of 26d. 2½ jital per ser, out of this quantity,one ser is burnt away in melting; and each ser yields 30 dams,there are coined 1170 dams,from which the merchant takes his capital and 18d. 19½j. as profit,33d. 10j. to to workman;15d 8j. for necessaries viz., 13d. 8j. for charcoal;1d for water; and 1d. for clay,58½d. go to the State". Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari,Vol.I, translated by H.Blochmann,Asiatic Society of Bengal,1873,p.38.

[44] S.H.Hodivala, Historical Studies in Mughal Numismatics,p.226.

[45] Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I., translated by H.Blochman, pp.26-27.

[46] W.H.Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1972, p. 183.; William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East,Vol.III, p.11.

The rate in 1636 was 25 to a Mahmudi, in 1640, it was 24, and twenty years afterwards, it was still 24 and 25, so that neglecting minor fluctuations, the rupee at any rate upto 1616 was worth 80 pice or (40 dam), from 1627 onwards was worth 60 pice(30 dam).[47] A letter from Surat in 1661 explained a sudden rise in the price for two reasons, firstly, the imported supplies were not sufficient. The authorities (Mughal) banned the export of copper (coined or uncoined) and the rate for a rupee rose as a result from 30 to 33 dams. Thus, we see that after 1650, the price of copper had risen greatly.[48] According to Thevenot, "the paissa is a piece of copper money current at Surat". Sixty eight bitter almonds could be purchased for one paissa.[49] The smallest copper coin was damri i.e. one eight of a dam or one "three hundredth and twentieth of a rupee". Contemporary authorities give a popular scale for copper money, the smallest unit being dam. While 3 dams made a damri, 8 damri a paissa and 2 paissa tanka or taka, 25 dams were supposed to equal one paissa and 50 paissa a tanka.[50] The Ain-i-Akbari explicitly tells us that paisa was the older name of dam, and it need cause no surprise when European travellers referring to it as pice, pize and by numerous other names.[51]

47W.H.Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1972, p.184 (Reprint).

48William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India, 1661-64, p.306; W.H.Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb, p. 185.

49Surendra Nath Sen(ed.), Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri, National Archives of India, Delhi, 1949, p.26.

50Shafaat Ahmad Khan(ed.), John Marshall in India, Being His Notes and Observations, Oxford University Press, London, 1927, p.416.

51Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I., translated by H.Blochmann, p.31.

Couries

As mentioned earlier for small transactions cowries or sea shells were used. According to Tavernier, "bitter almonds and couries were current mostly in Gujrat, bitter almonds were imported from Persia. They grew in dry and arid places between rocks and the trees which produced them closely resembled the 'broom'. "They sometimes give 35 or 40 of them for the paissa".[52] According to Tavernier again the small unit of currency consisted of shells called as corries, which had the edges inverted and they were not found in any part of the world save in the Maldive islands. The export of cowries to the empire of Great Mogul and particularly to the Kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda were the principal source of revenue for the King of Maldive islands.[53] Cowries were sold at the rate of 80 for one paisa at the places like coastal areas, while at Agra, sold at 50 for one paisa. Bowery wrote, cowries are shells, brought from the islands of Maldive."A great quantitie passe for one rupee, not lesse than 3200, as shell he shewed more largely in the moneys of this kingdom".[54]

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[52] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.I,p.27.

[53] Ibid. The above statement of Tavernier is far from true as money cowries (cyhramoneta) according to V.Ball have a much wider distribution, though Maldive Islands have provided the larger proportion of the supply. Ibid.,p.28n.

[54] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowrey's A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, Hakluyt Society, Cambridge, 1905, p.200.

Fineness of Silver and Gold Coins of India

In Akbar's time, the coins were noted for their fineness. Edward Terry says, "The coins there is more pure than in any part of the world, being of pure silver without alloys".[55] According to Thomas Bowery, "They alsoe coyne Rupees here of the finest refined gold, which are called gold moors".[56] According to Moll, gold and silver coins were finer in India than in any other country. He further adds, "that the Mahmudis and the rupees were of pure silver".[57] Mundy remarked, "the current oin is of good gold, silver and copper". Thevenot adds, "the silver currency of the great Mughals is finer than any other".[58] John Fryer also held the similar views about the currency of India, as he found it to be of pure gold and silver.

Ovington, who visited Surat in the year 1658 testified to purity of gold and silver coins at Surat. He says,"the gold of Surat is so very fine that 12 or 14 per cent may be often gained by bringing it to Europe. And the silver,which is the same all over India, outdoes even the Mexico... I never saw any clipt money there, and it is rare if either the gold and silver coin is

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[55] William Foster(ed.),Early Travels in India, p. 302.

[56] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p. 217.

[57] Herbert Moll, The Present State of Proper India, p. 271.

[58] Surindera Nath Sen(ed.), Indian Travels of Careri and Thevenot, p.26.

falsified.[59] Careri who visited India in 1695 also found the gold and silver currency of the Mughals to be very fine.[60]

The English factors in 1656 A.D. wrote to the Company from Surat about the fineness of the Mughal coins ordered by Aurangzeb thus: "The new King, Aurangzeb, hath raised his coin to 5/8 per cent than formerly".[61] The raising of the rupee to 5/8 per cent finer than before was highly objectionable to the shroffs at Surat and they greatly resented it as it caused them some loss without lowering the price of silver. The trouble arose when the English factors tried to sell their silver at the usual price and the shroffs refused to accept it at the old price. The English President at Surat wrote to the Company on November 5, 1657, explaining their difficulties in disposing of their silver. The letter ran as follows:

"We found some difficulty in the sale of it(silver) at the usual price, there being an order come from the king to make the rupee finer; which was demanded of the shroffs by the Governor of the city; who declared, out of the small gain they had coming to them by coining it, they could not raise the alloy, except the merchant would lower the price of silver, upon which they were

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[59] H.G.Rawlinson(ed.), John Ovington's Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689, London, 1929, p.131-132.

[60] Surindera Nath Sen(ed.), Indian Travels of Careri and Thevenot, p.253

[61] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1655-60, p.211.

all imprisoned, and the business in suspense for one month. All which time our money lay dormant, till the Dutch and we making a public complaint at the Durbar... at last prevailed so far that they were all released and the mint opened and your money sold at the old and usual prices so that for the present the difference was ended.[62]

Thevenot who visited Surat in 1666 was obliged to remark that the "silver money of the great Mughal is finer than any other for whenever a stranger enters the Empire, he is made to change the silver he hath, whether piastres (a Spanish coin) or Abasis (Persian coin) into the money of the country, and at the same time they are melted down and the silver refined for the coining of rupees".[63]

Shroffs

In the gold and silver markets of the country(India) the shroffs played an important role. Their main job was to test the currency. They were appointed to examine the purity of gold, and silver at the various mints of the country. The currency in the Mughal Empire was of the highest metallic purity. The currency system moreover, was of the 'free' coinage that is to say; it was open to any to take bullion to the mint and get it converted into

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[62] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1655-60,p.120.

[63] Surindera Nath Sen(ed.), Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri, p.253.

specie. The result was that the coins circulated at values practically corresponding to their weights in the respective metals, and the ratios at which one unit exchanged for another of a different metal was a matter to be determined by the market, and not the administration.

All the gold or silver imported into the country was taken to the mint and converted into the currency of the country.[64]

According to Tavernier all the gold and silver which came to Surat was taken to the custom house, adjoining the fort. After the custom clearance(which was 2 per cent on gold and silver), it was removed by the Daroga of the mint who gave them equal amount of Indian currency.[65]

The Shroffs were experts in determining the weight and age of every coin. The other function of the Shroffs or Shroffs was the money changing. The Shroffs would change the old rupees (which were less than standard weight) into the newly coined rupees and also gold Mohurs into rupees and rupees into Mahmudis or dams. The value of those coins constantly fluctuated in accor-

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[64] Irfan M.Habib, "Currency System of the Mughal Empire,1556-1707", Medieval India Quarterly, Vol.IV, 1961, pp.1-2.

[65] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India,Vol.I, pp. 8-9.

dance with the fluctuations in the prices of bullion. According to Bowery, there were many Shroffs or money changers in Masulipatam.[66] "The Banias... of whom some are Shroffs or Bankers, others broakers, employed between merchant and merchant for buying and selling".[67] According to the records of Fort St. George, "in 1680, 20 chests of gold and 2 bags of Ryalls of 8 delivered to the Sharoffs for alloy".[68]

According to Charles Lockeyer, "a considerable quantity of (bullion) is seldom bought or sold, butt the Shroffs who are of the chitty cast, and in general brokers to this business examine and weight it impartially between both parties having a small allowance for their care".[69]

Thus, Shroffs were experts in their profession and would deal with any currency problem. The letter written below by the English Company on March,1661 to the Governor of Surat clearly revealed the shrewedness of the Shroffs in the art of handling

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[66] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.70.

In Arabic Shroffs were known by the various names such as Sarraf, Sairafi, Sairaf. The word is used by the Europeans in China and India and is there applied to the experts who are employed by banks and mercantile firms to check the quality of the dollar that pass into the custom houses.They(Shroffs) also take their commission, H.Yule & A.C.Burnell, Hobson-Jobson, A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases,p.831.

[67] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India,Vol.I, p.167.

[68] Records of Fort St. George, 5-8-1680, p. 31.

[69] Charles Lockyer, An Account of the Trade in India, London,1711, p.28.

foreign currency - the letter ran as: "Your Governor and Shroffs combine together to deceive us in debasing our silver in ignotts. We can only say that each ignott that we send you is of the full fineness as they come invoiced into you, so it must be your care to maintain the same and suffer us to be abused by those shroffs"[70]

Working of Mints

The Mughals issued their coins from a large number of mints throughout their empire. In 1595, copper coins were issued by as many as forty two mints; the rupees by fourteen mints and muhrs by four.[71] The number of rupee mints increased during the time of Aurangzeb, who issued rupees from forty mints.[72] It was a great achievement for the Mughal administration that it maintained uniformity of standard in the issues from so many mints throughout the country. Since the mints worked on the basis of 'free coinage'; any one could take bullion to the mint and get it converted into the currency of the country by making a special payment to shroffs and others. The charges amounted to 5.6 per cent of the value of the coins minted.[73] Gold coins in the later

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[70] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1661-64, pp. 22, 159.

[71] Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, translated by H.Blochmann, Vol. I,p.31.

[72] Tapan Ray Chaudhuri & Irfan Habib(eds.), Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. II, p. 361.

[73] The Mint Master was called Darogha; the assays were made by the Sairafi,other officials were the Amin, who was a kind of spy on the other; Mushrif was to keep the accounts, See Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, pp. 19-20.

Table 10.1

Number of Specimens of Silver Coins in Indian Museums

Reign	Ahmadabad Mint				Surat Mint			
	Lucknow	Lahore	Calcutta	Total	Lucknow	Lahore	Calcutta	Total
Akbar	153	51	53	257	0	1	0	1
Jahangir	79	27	32	138	14	4	5	23
Shahjahan	34	9	12	55	88	22	31	141
Aurangzeb	21	5	11	37	131	55	91	277
Total	287	92	108	187	233	82	127	442

Source: W.H.Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb, Munshiram Manoharlal, 2nd Impression, Delhi, 1972, p. 177.

days of Akbar reign were struck in four provinces only, Delhi, Bengal, Ahmadabad and Kabul. The copper coins were struck in 28 towns of the country. After Akbar's conquest of Gujrat in 1573, Surat mint became the chief mint of Gujrat, though the other mint was stationed at Ahmadabad. Early in the reign of Shahjehan, the importance of Surat mint was enhanced. All the imported silver whether in the shape of coins or bullion was straight to be taken to the mint at Surat and re-shaped and re-issued in the form of ruppes or Mahmudis. Ovington remarked about Surat mint that "whenever strange coins come into the hands of the Mughal officers, it is melted down and converted into rupies,which are stamped with the particular characters into of the Emperor than reigning. After the Emperor's death, the value of it abated, may a piece or two in a roupie, because of its antiquity,whereby they say, so much of its worth is wore off and only the new coin passes current without any dimimution".[74] According to Fryer, Surat mint was a 'large town of offices within itself".[75]

With the establishment of the European factories and particularly of English and Dutch, the importance of Surat mint

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[74] H.G.Rawlinson,(ed.), John Oxington's Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689, London, 1929, p. 132.

[75] William Crooke(ed.), John Fryer's New Account of the East India and Persia, Hakluyt Society, London, 1909, Vol.II,p.248.

gained more importance. In the year 1634, the import of silver at Surat had increased considerably and it had outrun the capacity of local mint, the English and Dutch therefore, faced considerably difficulty in obtaining currency. The Mughal Governor had to give orders regarding the increase of the capacity of the Surat mint. With the continuous increase of imports and silver at Surat, the importance of Surat mint enhanced while that of Ahmadabad was reduced to subordinate position. This change is evident from the collection of the Mughal coins in the Indian Museums which in the aggregate provides an insight of the importance of the different mints.

Foreign Coins

According to Herbert Moll, "Whatever foreign coins fall into the hands of the Mogols Governor is melted into rupee with the characters of the reigning monarch". He gave the following evaluation of Indian currency in terms with the European counterparts.[76] According to him:

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[76] Herbert Moll, The Present State of Modern India, p.271.

Passia of Copper	=	half a penny
Silver, Fanam	=	2 pence
Rupee (Silver)	=	2s. 3d.
Gold Mohur	=	14 silver rupees
*Pagoda	=	9 shillings.[77]

According to Careri, "Money coined in India was Rupia, half rupee and quarter rupee of silver. Golden rupee was worth 13¼, Silver rupees or 6 pieces of eight Spanish money(rial of 8), half rupees and quarters on both sorts there were Persian character with the name of the city, where it was coined and the name of the king on the reverse. Copper coins were called Paissa, 54 of which made a rupee of silver".[78] Tavernier was of the opinion that for the coined gold which could be brought to India, the best pieces were rose nobles,[79] old Jacobuses, Albertuses and other ancient pieces which could prove more

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[77] Herbert Moll, The Present State of Proper India, p.271.
*Pagoda - According to Moreland, this coin was called Pagoda by Europeans but really named Varbha or Han, a very old unit in South India, was the standard of the Vijayanagar Kingdom in 16th century and was also current in the Muslim Kingdom of Delhi. W.H.Moreland, Relations of Golconda in the Early XVII Century, Hakluyt Society, London, 1931, p.92n. According to another estimate it was a South Indian coin whose value was 5s.8d., William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, Vol. II, pp.61,123.

[78] Surindera Nath Sen, Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri, p.253.

[79] Rose Nobles - A noble was an English coin worth 6s. 8d.;
3 Jacobus - An English coin of James I worth 25s.
Albertuses: It was a Dutch doller, which was equivalent to 4s. 6d.
V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.I, p.13n.

profitable for the merchants. As far as the gold coins were concerned, ducats of Germany, Hungry, Denmark, Poland were more durable and consistent. The golden ducates of Venice, were considered to be the best as each golden ducat was equal to 4 to 5 sols.

Other Coins

Guilder (Guilders or golden or Florin represented by sign £) were not current at Surat but Dutch accounts were kept in them at the Dutch factory. Guilders were the money of accounts.[80] The guilder contained 20 stivers and the rupee was valued by the Dutch at the fixed rate of 24 stivers, making the guilder 5/6 of a rupee.[81]

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[80] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.I, p.411 (Appendix)

[81] W.H.Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb, p. 330.
Guilder or Florin - Its value in currency seems to have been about 1s. 9d. to 1s. 9½d. and to the livre, it bore the proportion of 5 to 6, which give the value for the latter of very nearly 1s 6d., Ibid.; V.Ball (ed.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol. I, p.413 (Appendix).

Rials of Eight

The Spanish rial of eight, a Spanish silver coin was the most common European currency current in the East. It was equivalent to 4s. 6d. or 5s. according to the course of exchange. "The Piastre and reale or rial, as determined by Sri Issac Newton and as valued by Tavernier were of equal value with the ecu,being therefore, worth 4s. 6d." Tavernier stated that the real was equal to 2 rupees or 4s 6d. Peter Floris was of the view that "Rial of eight was a Spanish silver coin imported into Asia by the Dutch and the English and current along the sea coasts. It was equivalent to 2 Indian ruppes, 4s. 6d. English money and 9½ Dutch guilders.[82] According to Owen C. Kail, rial of eight was the most common European coin in the East. It was equivalent to 2 rupees or 48 stuivers. The 'rix dollar' had the same value as the rial of eight.[83]

According to Richard Carnac Temple, the value of rial was equivalent to 5s ½d. Its value recorded in 1672 was worth 5s.[84]

Thus, the foreign currency on the basis of free coinage i.e. it was open to anyone to take bullion and deposit them into mint and were converted there into Indian currency.

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[82] W.H.Moreland(ed.), The Relations of Golconda in the Early XVII Century, p. 27n.; V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol. I, p.412 (Appendix).

[83] Owen C.Kail, The Dutch in India, Macmillan India Ltd.,Delhi,1981, p.219.

[84] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), The Diaries of Streynsham Master, John Murray, London, 1911, p.303n.

Banking and Hundies

The institution of banking whose main function was to give loans on payment of interest was known to the Indian people since ancient times. Money-lending was a recognized form of acquiring wealth according to Manu. The profession of money lending was confined to Vaisyas and Sudras in ancient times.

Banking in India in 17th century did not differ much from this traditional practice. There were no guilds or institutions doing the regular banking business, but there were indigenous bankers dealing with advances singly or jointly. The bankers were usually big land-holders or from 'bania community', who gave money to the various persons or groups on the payment of interest. There was no organised system of banking under the Mughals. The Mughal kings granted loans to any person they liked. In the provinces the financial advances were made through the provincial governors.

As the Mughal Emperor did not like to engage himself in small loans, therefore, the gap or vaccum was filled by the private individual finances called the Shroffs. A few banking houses which shot into existence during the Mughals were known as Kotheas. Saffafs or Shroffs had to work under the orders of the Munim or the Agent of the financer. The State permitted lending business to the private financer on three conditions:(a) that there would be no competition with the State (B)that the Emperor would

always be consulted alongwith his officials; if they wanted to introduce any new business, (c) and that the rates once fixed by the Emperor would not violated and strictly followed and that the King's rate would determine the market tone.[85] These agencies carried on money banking business whose main functions were twofold: exchanging coins, old for new at a certain amount of discount and the issuing and discounting of Hundees.Commenting on the indigneous banking in the country, Vera Anstey rightly observed that "Very many centuries ago, the native bankers or 'Shroffs' conducted financial operations on a comparatively large scale in the chief commercial centres... They conducted large transactions at the chief commercial centres and at the court of the native rulers. Their credit stood so high that their hundees were readily negotiable throughout the country and often beyond the bounds of India.[86] For depositing money, they charged a certain rate of interest from the depositors for the safe custody. If a business firm had its branches in several centres, the branches of Kothees (banking houses) were also opened there. With the development and improvement of Indigo trade,[87] neel Kothees

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[85] D.Pant, Commercial Policy of the Mughals, Taraporevala, Bombay, 1930, p. 73.

[86] Vera Anstey, The Economic Development of India, Longman Green & Co., London, 1929, pp.403-404.

[87] D.Pant, Commercial Policy of the Mughals, p.73.

or better known as 'Neel' had their centres of Indigo production like Sarkhej (near Ahmadabad), Ahmadabad, Biana (Agra), etc. Along with the banking business some other business was also combined. The failure of Kothies were declared by a red flag. At the end of Akbar's reign, there were only one or two Kothees which had a flourishing business but due to stiff competition many successful ventures failed.

The development of banking in the times of Jahangir was mainly due to the persons like Virji Vohra, a sealthy merchant of Surat*. The English started their dealings with him in 1619. In 1625, he was mentioned as 'Prince Merchant' of Surat; in 1628 'the Great Banian Merchant'; and in 1634 'the Greatest and Richest General Merchant that Inhabiteth this vast Kingdom'. In Surat he was the largest creditor of the company and his Vakils or Agents were employed in Agra, Ahmadabad, Burhampur and other cities of India. According to the English merchants, 'the potency of Veerjee Vora (who hath beene the usuall merchant, and is become now the sole monopolist of all European commodities) is observed to bear such sway amongst the inferior merchants of this town that,when they would often tymes buy and give greater prices, they are still restrayened not dareing the betray their intents to his knowledge and their owne sufference in so much that the tyme and price is still in his will and at his own disposure". In 1643, the Court of Committees sent from England an 'Iron Chest from Nuremberg as a present to him '. According to Thevenot who visited

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*Much has already been said about Virji Vohra,who it is said that if ever he was known to be interested in a certain commodity,no body else would make a bid for it.He was a great financer of the East India Company.,B.G.Gokhale,Surat in the 17th Century,Popular Prakash,Bombay,1978,pp.137-145.

Surat in 1666, "there are people vastly rich in Surat and a banian, a friend of mine, called Vergovora, is reckoned to be worth at least eight millions".[88]

The other communities who were having a thriving business were Chettis of Malabar and Coromandel. The banias of Gujrat, the Khatries of Punjab, the Marwaries of Rajasthan and the Chettis of Tamil country were some of the leading trading classes and also the great bankers, who provided necessary finance to industry and trade. Similarly, Jagat Seths of Bengal were also reckoned as the prominent indigeneous bankers.

According to Streynsham Master and other English Factory Records, the two important merchants of Balasore,Khemchand and Chintamanshah played an important role in the trade of Bengal in the second half of the 17th century. They were referred in records as 'Chimcham' and 'Chintamund Sand'. For many years,they were the principal brokers to the English Company at Balasore for providing commodities for the investment of the Company.[89] In the factory records of 1669, Khem Chand was mentioned as the chief 'Merchant of Balasore'.

Another important and eminent Shroff of Kasimbazar was Chaturmal, who had a good deal of transactions with the company.

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[88] Surindera Nath Sen(ed.), The Travels of Thevenot and Careri,p.15.

[89] Richard Carnac Temple(ed.), Thomas Bowery's Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.154n.

For merchants like Khemchand and Chintaman Shah, See Sushil Chaudhuri's Trade and Commercial Organisations in Bengal,Firma, K.L.Mukhopadhya, Calcutta, 1975, pp.62-84.

He would often buy the treasure from the Company and 'looked after the affairs of the company at the mint at Raj Mahal.[90] He had an experienced assistant whose help was continuously sought by the company. He used to buy English goods like lead, tin, copper plates, etc. from the company at the opportunate time.[91] Similarly, Seth Manik Chand popularly known as Jagat Seth was famous for the great services rendered as an officer of the royal mint. Even an orthodox ruler like Aurangzeb honoured him with the title of Jagat Seth.

The other important function of the indigneous bankers was issuing and discounting of Hundis, bills of exchange and the letter of credit. Tavernier makes a mention of the Hundies being met at Surat two months after the date by charging a higher rate of exchange. "At Lahore, he elaborates, "on Surat the exchangge goes upto 6¼ per cent; at Ahmadabad at 1 to 1½ per cent, at Sironj 3 per cent; at Burhanpur 2½ to 3 per cent; at Dacca 10 pe r cent; at Patna 7 to 8 per cent, at Benaras 6 per cent. At these last three places (i.e. Dacca, Patna, Benaras), they give only letters of exchange on Agra, and at Agra they give others to Surat,

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[90] Factory Records, Hugli, Vol. I, Diary and Consultation Book, 28 July, 1677.

[91] Ibid, Kasimbazar, Vol. I, Diary and Consultation, August 1677, 5 January, 18 January, 1678.

the whole amounting to the sum stated. At Golconda 4 to 5 per cent; on Goa the same at Deccan 3 per cent, at Bijapur 3 per cent, at Daultabad 1 to 1½ per cent". He further adds that business was risky if the goods were stolen in the way, the money was lost to the financers.[92]

Notwithstanding its imperfections in the context of modern banking, the indegenous banking system proved to be a successful trade auxilary.

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[92] V.Ball(tr.), Jean Baptiste Tavernier's Travels in India, Vol.I, p.36.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION/RESUME:
ENGLISH TRADE AND THE MUGHAL EMPERORS
1556-1707

The foregoing account of the progress of English trade would remain incomplete without a resume of the trade concessions and facilities secured by the English traders from the Mughal Emperors wily nille.

Much before the foundation of the English East India Company, India had been visited by a number of English travellers like Thomas Stephens, Ralph Fitch, Newberry and Leeds. They were essentially adventurers and came with that spirit. However, in 1599, John Mildenhall came during the time of Akbar. His object was to try to negotiate with the 'Great Mughal' some kind of commercial treaty or understanding, which should be a basis for the English trade in India. He failed to secure any treaty with the king and returned unsuccessful. However, more systematic attempts to open up trade with India were made during the time of Jahangir, when Hawkins, the 'Envoy of the King of England' visited his (Jahangir) Court in 1609. He came in during

the third voyage of the English East India Company in his ship Hector in 1608. Hawkins met the Emperor at Agra and was given every assurance, regarding trade facilities to be provided to the English. However, nothing substantial could be obtained due to Portuguese insimiation who 'frustrated the attempts of the English for any trade concession." Therefore, the commercial position of the English was far from satisfactory during Jahangir's time. The conflict (1613) between Portuguese and English provided a suitable opportunity to the English which considerably helped them in 'coming closer to the Mughal King' and thus, acquiring trade concession in India.[1] By 1614, the factors opened the trade avenues at various places like Cambay, Baroda, Broach and Agra. The commercial position of the English was further strengthened by coming of Thomas Roe, an ambassador designate of the King of England to India. Thomas Roe was sent by the Company in 1615 for concluding a commercial treaty. He stayed at the Mughal Court till the autumn of 1618 but failed to secure the 'draft' treaty. Though a failure so far as the treaty was concerned, he was able to raise the prestige of his country to a considerable extent by exposing and fighting against the corrupt officials of the Mughal Empire. His Embassy

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[1] Alexander Rogers, Henry Beveridge, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol.II, English translator, Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1914.

was a landmark in the history of Indo-British Relations.[2] However, Indo-British commerce was more or less regular after 1614, and was making steady progress. But what Thomas Roe, did not realize was his status or position in Mughal Empire. Their (English) status and privileges were greatly dependent on the 'firman' issued by the Emperors from time to time which were also 'alterable and revokable' as the situation demanded. There did not arise any question of making an agreement or convention on terms of equality between the Mughal State and foreign merchants. Thomas Roe perhaps failed to realize his unstable position and in vain did he try to conclude the 'Draft Treaty'. Secondly, English had nothing to offer in return. Their goods were a few and expensive. Of them, broadcloth formed the most important item which was hardly in demand in India. Mostly, the cloth and other goods brought by the English were often given as presents to the King and Nobles in order to secure trade facilities. Even their presents, as compared to the Dutch or Portuguese were not very attractive and even 'returned' sometimes. Moreover, Indian merchants also never showed any desire to buy English goods or share English trade. Therefore, the English soon realized that their demands would never be accepted but they persistently went ahead with their schemes and insisted upon the Mughal authorities to grant them free trade in India.

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[2]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21, vi, Introduction.; Also See, Phanindranath Chakrabarty, Anglo-Mughal Commercial Relations,1583-1717, O.P.S.Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta, 1983,pp.65-94.

Thomas Roe though not successful in signing a treaty with the Mughal Monarch, tried to control the Red Sea trade by capturing Indian vessels and other belonging to the Mughal royality. The underlying idea was to compel the Mughal authorities to redress their old standing grievances in India. According to Roe, 'such a course could scarcely fail to bring local offenders to their senses and at the same time attract the notice of the court'. Roe thought that Mughals would not fail to realise that English were indeed as they claimed to be the 'lords of the seas' and would then listen with due respect to the claim of despised foreigners to a free market and free treatment for themselves and their goods.[3] Roe urged that assortments of both English and Indian goods might be sold at the Red sea ports at high profits to the merchants from Egypt who frequented pilgrim ports.[4] Roe therefore, showed surprising zeal in capturing the Red sea trade. He, therefore, controlled the Red sea trade for the following reasons:

1. Since English goods were never in much demand in India to produce return cargoes',he thought of establishing a 'branch trade' between Surat and Red sea.

2. Moreover, the English were facing considerable opposition of the Dutch in South East Asia, so they thought of finding new avenues and therefore, 'concentrated on Indian trade'.

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[3] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21, p.xiii, Introduction.

[4] Ibid., p. xiv, Introduction.

But it soon became clear that Roe had underestimated the opposition of Surat merchants to his new venture. They (merchants) organised a general boycott of the English and stopped selling their goods, not a single 'yeard of Calico would be sold to them'.[5] The principal merchants of Surat petitioned the prince (Khurram) not to allow the English to share that trade for "if hee did they were all unden and cittye beggered, having no other place to tradd unite but the Red sea which they were contened with".[6]

The import of coral trade into India from "Red Sea" was again resented by the Surat merchants. As they thought, "this innovation was a gratuitons interference with their trade" and strong representations were made to the English and the Mughal Governor. The petitioners said, "they will not suffer it to be brought into Surat by strong hand". After four day's dispute, coral was warehoused at Rander pending a reference to the Court.[7]

Roe could not implement his scheme of seizing Indian vessels in Red Sea before August 1619 when he had already left India. Much before the implementation of his (Roe's) policy, English had been indulging in piratical activities and capturing

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[5]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21, p.175.

[6]Ibid., p. 137.

[7]William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East, Vol.V, Sampson Low Marston Co., London,1896-1901,pp.206-207.

Indian junks in Red Sea. Early in 1617, Alexander Childe, Master of the James surprised a Surat vessel laden with timber in the Red Sea. He detained it for three months and spent 'the one half of her loading'. The Company was required to make compensation for it. Soon after, the Company's fleet seized yet another ship belonging to a Surat merchant. The occupants who were mostly banias secured their liberty by swimming back to the shores at night. They appraised the Governor of the situation, the latter strongly expressed his anguish over the situation to the President of the Company, Thomas Kerridge, who assured him to make adequate compensations to the merchants. However, the broker of the Company was placed in iron chains.[8] The first act of drama began in November 1619. The English fleet under Commander Brickly captured a cargo vessel belonging to Surat merchants going from Sind to Persia. As a result of this act of hostility against the Mughal Empire, Hughes and Parkar, two servants of the East India Company at Agra were imprisoned by the orders of Asaf Khan and Sind merchants were ordered to be given Rs.10,200 as a compensation to the 'grievous loss' incurred by them. After a few days confinement, both the factors were released from the gaol.[9]

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[8] William Foster(ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East, Vol.V, pp.206-207.

[9] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India, 1622-23, pp.xvi, xvii, Introduction.

The Company soon found itself in big dilemma as it knew by this time that it would not be possible for a 'handful of Company's servants to enter into combat with the Mughal authorities. As the Mughal authorities always took a serious view of the situation, so they never took it lying down. If they were not strong on sea, they were not weak on the land. They were not slow to react to the piractical activities of the Europeans and particularly those of the English. If a ship was looted by some Englishmen, the President of the East India Company had to face the difficult situation. The President was taken into custody and asked to make up the loss. Sometimes, even the other members of the Council had to feel the wrath of the Mughal authorities. The piractical activities of the English greatly jeopardised their commercial interests and their trade suffered. Naturally, the English would not resort to piratical activities, easily and would mostly avoid it. Even rumours of piracies sent a shiver though them as they 'feared to be kept fast and their goods seized upon'.[10] It, therefore, appears paradoxical that Thomas Roe who was strongly opposed to the view of English indulging in piracy as they served no useful purpose, would resort to such a recourse. He had on one occasion even warned the directors that "your goods and our persons"

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[10]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India 1618-21, Introduction.

would have to answer for the nefarious activities of sea-rovers, "there must be no traders"[11] and consequently, your trade in India is utterly lost."[12] On another occasion, Roe had reprimanded the two factors Phillope Bernedote and Robert Rich, who were sent against the pirates, turned out pirates themselves. They could have plundered queen mother's ship, but were debarred due to the timely intrusion of the English fleet from India. Later on, he (Roe) assured the Mughal King that the two factors (Rich and Benodote) were made 'prisoners in my ships',"kept in irons and that I would soe send them home in His Majestie, who make them an example of such bouldness to dare to disturbe the allies of his Crowne".[13] In January 1618, Ikhlas Khan, the Captain of 'Jahangir' approached Roe and requested him for the safe conduct of his ship to Red sea. The English ambassador sent instructions to all English merchants to refrain from molesting the vessel and its mariners.[14] Next month, Roe assured I'timad-ud-daula that English stood by their promise to safe conduct of Indian ships to the Red sea.[15] Earlier in 1617, at the request of Indian merchants, the English at Surat gave passes to ships of 'Danda

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[11]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21,p.339.

[12]William Foster(ed.), The Embassay of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, pp.451-52.

[13]Ibid., pp.422-23.

[14]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1618-21,p.2.

[15]Ibid., p.5.

Raspone' for the Red Sea.[16] In a letter written to the Company in February 1618, Roe expressed fear that the English might not succeed in procuring a suitable port from the Mughal Government. The reason being, he said that they are weary of us as it is, and wounded all their trade, so that by much persuation of the Governors, the merchant goes to sea.[17] He warned the Company against the piracy that may result in disaster for the English. He said, "You will have the seas full and your trade in India is utterly lost and our lives exposed to pledge in the hands of Moores. I am loath to lie in irons for any man's faults but myne owne".[18] It, therefore, appears surprising that such a person (Roe) could give instructions to his factors to seise and plunder the Indian ships in Red Sea. It looks as if he was forced to follow such a course since he might have realised that only way left to him was to exert the pressure on the Mughal monarch by capturing India's (Sea-borne) Red sea trade. He was aware of the fact that the Mughal authorities would not be able to resort to retaliation as the strong position of the English on seas placed a powerful weapon in their hands. If on the one hand they could harass the Mughal ships, on the other hand, they offered

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[16] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1618-21, p.192.

[17] William Foster(ed.), The Embassay of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, p. 434.; The English Factories in India.1618-21, p.13.

[18] Ibid., p.17.

them protection on payment basis. The Mughals often applied for safe conduct of their ships to different European nations.

The second part of the drama began from September 1623 when Captain Hall began seizing Mughal ships. On October 1,1623, Hall abroad the blessing informed the President at Surat that they had anchored near Daman with a number of captured Mughal junks under his command.[19]

The English had thus won all along the line. They had secured compensation for their chief losses and important concessions for the future. They had dictated their terms to Ishaq Beg, the Governor and their leading opponents.[20] Saif Khan, Mutasaddi of Surat alongwith a couple of merchants granted a number of facilities to the English. They were granted free trade throughout the Mughal's dominions, including Bengal; they were allowed to rent the houses of their choice for the factory purposes. They were allowed to buy or construct four frigates each year, several minor forms of oppression were provided against their guards were freed from land tolls, and arrangement was made by which a sum of 40,000 mahmudis was to be paid yearly in lieu of all customs at Surat, both outwards and inwards.[21]

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[19] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1622-23, p.264.

[20] Ibid., p.xxxiii, Introduction.

[21] Ibid.

The agreement was then sent to the Emperor for confirmation. Captain Willoughby, a factor, obtained a royal firman from Jahangir, then at Lahore, reached Surat on September 7, 1624.[22] By this agreement, the Mughals not only allowed the English to have an access to Red sea trade but the English secured the right to convey the Mughal junks from Surat to Mocha and back. The Mughal prestige and trade had suffered a great set-back and their monopoly of Red sea was completely shattered. Early in October 1621, the Surat President was informed by Captain Weddel at Swally that some English pirates had captured and sunk and Indian ship which possessed a valuable treasure including two tons of gold. Waddel feared that their action "wil fall heavy upon us".[23] In March 1622, English factors appeared before Mohammad Taqi, Diwan of Suba, to make compensation for the alleged loss. They pleaded innocence and threw the blame on Dutch. Again after fifteen days they were remanded to custody and kept in the Governor's house for four days. An Indian merchant Gurdas furnished security for the English President and so the orders for their release were issued. The English had to suffer in Agra as well, where they were kept in prison for over

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[22] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1622-23, pp.27-30.

[23] Ibid.,1618-21,pp.300-301.

five months, first in their own house and then in the common castle. It appears from a letter of Surat President that the Ahmadabad factors were in prison even in May 1622. He suggested 'that endeavours should be made by all possible methods including bribery to get certificates from the Governor in our favour.[24] Therefore, the pirartical acts of the English could not produce results which they were hoping as the Mughals were quite powerful on the land. They (the English) were subjected to severe punishments when caught, packed and stifled together into 'close and airless and unholesome corners'.[25] They (English) therefore, could not stand any longer and their resistance collapsed. At last, President Rastell and other factors gave their consent to come to an agreement with the Mughal Goverment. They agreed to make compensation for all that had been taken from theSurat merchants on condition thatk they should accept payment in goods on rates prescribed upon.[26] Thus, the European and particularly English exerting pressure on the Mughals by capturing their junks did not always produce favourable results as the President and other factors had to bear the brunt at the hands of the Mughals in India. But still the

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[24] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1622-23, pp.18,68-69,71-80.

[25] Ibid.,1624-29, pp.36,55-56.

[26] Ibid., pp.55-56.

Mughals could not deny them certain trade privileges due to the powerful naval positions of the English in India. The other methods besides looting the ships were adequate presents given from time to time to the Mughals. They always produced favourable results as the Mughal monarchs and the nobility had a big craze for the European goods. Jahangir demanded the presents straight from the English King James I, without showing least hesitation. The interests of the English at the close of Jahangir's reign were represented at the Court by Bangham and by Clements, who were the second in command in factory at Agra. In December 1627, on the arrival of Shahjehan in Gujrat, Thomas Kerridge, the President of the Surat factory went to Broach to offer him presents. At Agra, Bangham and Clements offered their felicitations to the new emperor. In March 1628, the Agra factors wrote that both English and Dutch had got into trouble with the king for buying and transporting saltpetre without his permission. Clement and Bangham had been kept prisoners for a day and a night in the castle. But with little judicious bribery they not only gained their liberty but obtained a licence to buy further quantity of saltpetre.[27] In 1629, English were invited to establish a factory in Sind. In 1630, Rastell timely intruded and saved a Mughal junk from the clutches of Portuguese.[28] However,

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[27]William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1624-29,p.30.

[28]Ibid., 1630-33, p.xxv, viii, xxxiv, Introduction.

the famine of 1630-31 had considerably effected the English trade in India and they had to close all their factories in the Deccan except Surat. The financial losses incurred by the slump were further aggravated by the attempts made by Shahjehan to monopolise the indigo trade.[29] But the king had to dissolve the monopoly for the Europeans showed a little desire to buy this commodity save at the prices agreed upon. Shahjehan had to remove the embargo on the indigo trade, but forbade the English ships to anchor anywhere except Swally, and also the building of frigates in India.

The capture of Taufiqi at Surat and Mahmudi, a Dieu junk by the English pirates led to the imprisonment of William Methold, the President of the East India Company at Surat and Robinson at Ahmadabad by a firman of Shahjahan on May 1636. The President was kepti in close confinement and was not allowed to leave the city and the English trade with Thatta or Cambay was completely banned. Their goods were also seized,[30] but Methold was released after eight weeks and in May 1636, he sent John Drake to seek the forgiveness from the Emperor Shahjehan. Their goods were restored, but they were forbidden to carry arms.

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[29] B.P.Saxena, Shahjahan of Dihli, Central Book Depot, Allahabad, 1973 p.306.

[30] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1634-36, p.256.

However, President Method showed his ignorance about the capturing of Indian junks and he was therefore, pardoned and a *firman* was issued for the furtherance of English trade in Bengal.

During Fremlen's administration, the presents were sent by the English to the Emperor and his sons. Since Dutch Mission to Court in 1642 had resulted in a favourable settlement regarding the rating of customs on goods exported by them. Naturally, they were equally eager to obtain a similar concession and a change of Governor at Surat in 1643, offered a suitable opportunity as the late Governor Quli Beg was going to court and had promised his active assistance. Letters were written to the king and his sons and presents worth Rs.9,000 were sent for Murad and Dara Shiekoh. The negotiations were made by John Turner, the late Chief at Agra. The presents produced a very favourable impression and the Emperor issued a *firman* complying with the wishes of the English in matters of rating of their goods. In addition, the King sent a jeweled dagger for the President, while Dara gave a valuable jewel and granted several *nishan* to facilitate English trade in Sind.[31]

The year 1641 was signalised by an important change in Government of Surat. Mr. Mir Musa, the Governor of the Surat had through corrupt practice had amassed a huge wealth from the Surat

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[31] William Foster(ed.), *The English Factories in India,1642-45*, p.x, Introduction.

mint and custom house, it was roughly 72 lakhs of mahmudis per annum. Therefore, he was summooed to Court to explain matter and the Emperor decided to abandon the system of 'farming the post and appoint salaried officials to receive the revenue and pay it into the royal treasury. He was transferred to Broach and Jan Quli Beg was appointed the Governor of Surat in his place. This transfer was heralded by Surat merchants and equally by English merchants. He (Mir Musa or Muizzul Mulk) was a typical product of his age and fairly representative of the character of Mughal district administration, especially in commercial policies, during the last years of Shahjahan. There was a practice of 'farming out' important posts in Mughal Empire and the payment of bribes for continuance in them. Muiz-ul-Mulk had to pay about three lakh of Mahmudis (about £ 15,000) and a bribe of some £ 1,000 to secure his post at Surat and continue in it.[32] A report stated that the Muiz-ul-Mulk had to pay 72 lakhs of Mahmudis for his Surat post and in 1641, he found himself short of his commitment by 31 laikhs.[33] In October 1650, he still had debt pending of many lakhs of rupees. It was, therefore, natural for the Governor to resort to corruption and oppresive practices in revenue collection in order to make up the loss. A letter of

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[32] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1630-33, pp.xvi, Introduction, 193.

[33] Ibid., 1642-45,pp.xxvi,vii.

January 27, 1642, refers to the happiness expressed by the people of Surat by his removal saying "for having this, Broach and Cambayat ports under his government, exacted most unreasonable and unjust customs because merchants, having brought down their goods from the inland countries must of necessity fall into his merciless clutches, if they at all intend either from Cambay or Surat to embark them.[34] Even Mandelslo, a German traveller also endorsed the corrupt practices of the Governor and fraud committed by him at the custom house. For instance in trade of Coral, he fixed its price in such a way as to extort higher duty and as for lead, he takes into his own hand and at what rate he pleases[35]. This was not an isolated example as the decline in administrative standards appears to have started from 1630 onwards. The royal monopoly over certain selected items of trade created serious problems like finding transportation, quicker release of commodities through customs and securing a fair return on business venture. To make matters worse, Governors like Muiz-ul-Mulk, Shaista Khan, Asaf Khan and many more had their own extensive interests which naturally took the precedence over the interests of the merchants to the detriment of general mercantile community[36].

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[34] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1642-45, p.24.

[35] Ibid.

[36] For the details of Muiz-ul-Mulk, see B.G.Gokhale,"Muizz-ul-Mulk, Governor of Surat", Journal of Indian History,Vol.XLIV, April,1966,p.65.

In 1650, Richard Davidge was sent to Delhi to secure certain trading rights. He was armed with presents and secured a firman granting the English freedom from road due, and ordering the officials in Surat and Sind to abstain from causing vexation to the English merchants. But it was found that firman pertaining to Surat contained a clause providing that in the event of their failing to agree with the Governor as to the price of goods required for the Emperor, these were to be sent upto Court and the price fixed there. Such an arrangement was not suitable as the President Merry declared that they would not accept the firman. But in the end had to content with a letter from Khalil-vallah-Khan to the Governor advising him to settle all such matters in Surat itself.[37] A firman regarding the trade in Bengal was secured by James Bridggman in 1657 with the help of Gabriel Boughton from Prince Shuja, who was staying in Raj Mahal.[38] Henceforward, the English trade grew rapidly at the close of Shahjehan's reign.

In the time of Aurangzeb (1661), the English trade was shaping very well and they (the English)were doing lucrative business. There was apparently a change in the working of English factories in India; all the Bengal establishments were made subordinate to the Presidency of Madras which turned out

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[37] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India.1651-54, pp. i-ii, Introduction.

[38] Ibid., p.xxvi, Introduction.

to be important like that of Surat. The Bengal trade grew rapidly. Subordinate factories were opened in Malda in 1676 and Dacca in 1668. But, however, the English came in confrontation with the Mughal authorities in Bengal. The English had their grievances against the local agents, who took bribes under the name of rahdari, presents (Peshkash) were also taken by the Mughal officers very frequently. Moreover, the English also complained that their packages of goods in transit were opened and goods taken away. Certain Governors(notably Azim-ush-Shan) tried to enrich themselves by seizing goods at low prices and then selling them in the market at normal prices.[39] This deal was termed as Sauda-i-Khas.[40] Shaista Khan on hearing the sack of Hugli by the English, decided to crush them and sent the vast detachment of cavalry for the same on 20th December, 1686. The English withdrew and took with them all their belongings and sent to Sutanati (modern Calcutta). However, Shaista Khan on 16th August,1687 issued a letter and permitted the English to renew their trade at Hugli. On 10th February,1681, an imperial decree was issued by Grand Wazir to the Diwan of Bengal, allowing the English to carry on their trade in that

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[39] Jadunath Sarkar, A Short History of Aurangzeb, M.C.Sarkar & Sons, Calcutta, 1930, pp.404-408.

[40] Ibid.,p. 409.

province provided they made the payment of Rs.3,000 a year in lieu of all customs and other dues.[41]

In Western India also the English traders complained about their suffering from the vexations and illegal interference and greed of the local officers to the Emperor. Atlast in October,1688, Sir John Child came to Swally with a fleet and sent to the Governor of Surat, his list of grievances of the English. The Governor became alarmed and imprisoned the English factors and placed guards over the factory and sent a force to Swally to capture. The latter escaped and retaliated by blockading the mouth of river below Surat. But all the Englishmen in Surat were kept in chains for 16 months. However, Child sought the forgiveness of the Emperor Aurangzeb, who was later pardoned and restored to their old position in the Indian trade on the condition of paying a fine of one and a half lakhs of rupees. These instances clearly reveal that the English inspite of frequent complaints about difficulties encountered by them so far as trade was concerned they had achieved a significant degree of economic penetration in various parts of the country in the 17th century.

It is well known that the economic life during Aurangzeb's time, was greatly, effected due to Maratha raids and plundering. From the Factory Records, it becomes clear that even persons like Virji Vohra and many others in Surat suffered great losses in the hands of Shivaji. To make the matters worse,

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[41] William Foster(ed.), The English Factories in India,1668-69, Introduction; Charles Fawcett, The English Factories in India, New Series,pp.311-315.

Aurangzeb's fanaticism and irrational trade policies and continuous wars posed serious problems in the country. As compared to Indian merchants, the English and Dutch were given valuable concessions by the Mughal Monarch. This preferential treatment also placed the English in a very favourable position. Piracy also did a considerable damage to Indian shipping and transferred the sovereignity of the seas to the English. A dynasty like that of Moghals whose traditions were all for fighting and conquest of land, never learned the lession of Sea Power and the commerce was permanently at the mercy of European navies that commanded the coastal at different times.

It is evident that none of the great Mughal Emperors had any constructive policy for encouraging or extending the commerce of India. There was no endeavour to ensure commerce freedom from interference and the handicaps were innumerable. They incurred religious fanaticism, Zenana intervention; official obstruction, fights of the kings, monopolising this or that trade and the fixation of prices at this or that level, interference of the economic force working in the market and finally, the inclination of the Monarchs to earn commercial profits for themselves.

AFTERWORD

The foregoing account of the growth, expansion and volume of English trade may remain incomplete without a reference to the various models of trade pointed out by experts on Asian trade and European expansion. As many as six models have recently been suggested.[1]

1. Individual Peddling - Here, the trader conducts his own business (small scale) and is in reality the decision making authority. He is the sole buyer and seller of his goods and decides the methods or routes(if he happens to be an itinerant) followed by him in transacting business. He, therefore, does not come under any political pressure and decides his own course of action. But his commercial intelligence is somewhat limited as he has to find out about everything for himself.

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[1] Dietmor Rothermund, Asian Trade and European Expansion in the Age of Mercantilism, Manohar Publications, 1981, Delhi, pp.8-9.

2. Collective Peddling - Here, two or more traders enter into partnership or deal and sends junior partners or employees to do the peddling for him. The decision making becomes more centralized and is based on a greater amount of information. Risk and other hazards increase but profits may be greater by way of compensation.

3. Occasional Consignments - The traders in this case do no longer accompany the goods but entrust it into the care of agents or dealers who sell them on their behalf and transfer the proceeds of the sales or consign other goods to them. Such consignments are made whenever, the situation seems to be particularly favourable.

4. Regular Consignments - In this case a permanent link is made and goods are delivered or despatched at regular intervals. Decision-making involves mutual accommodation. The very regularity of this trade also implies a higher degree of vulnerability.

5. Forward Trading - The merchant tries to accrue gains by recurrent transactions by ensuring his supplies in advance at a suitable price. Such type of trading requires a lot of speculation and needs a great deal of commercial intelligence. Decision making involves high risks.

6. Captive Trading - The merchant or trader is not only very positive about the transaction or the stability of the demands caused due to scarcity or uncertainity as far as the

supply is concerned, shall try his best to capture the sources of this supply, ward off competitors as far as possible and establish relationships with the suppliers which connects them to his interest. Decision making comes closer to the political power and vulnerability extends to a new dimension as the situation invites intervention by those who can hold up supply so as to increase the price of the commodity for which there is such a demand.

But Asian trade according to Jacob Van Leur was described as "Peddling trade"[2] and various other scholars have followed him in this line of argument as 'such transactions were found fit in this theory'. But sometimes Asian merchants participated in ventures which included the regular dispatch of large consignments as forward trading. There were stray cases of captive trade as well.[3] The notable example of this trade was Gujrati merchant or a prince among merchants, Virji Vohra, who, it is said that if ever he was known to be interested in a certain commodity, no body else would dare to make a bid for it. He was a regular financier of the East India Company and had a number of Vakils or Agents who worked for him.[4]

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[2]Rothermund, op. cit., p.11.

[3]Captive trade would radiate from Europe to Asia and not vice versa as the European goods were in no demand in India. European rulers were therefore, more interested in extending external support to this captive trade while as Asian rulers hardly showed any zest for such support, Rothermund, p.11.

[4]B.G.Gokhale, Surat in the 17th Century, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1978, pp. 137-145.

However, persons like Virji Vohra or Jagat Seth were unable to bring any material change or any diversion towards 'capitalism' since they deliberately or unconsciously did not invest their capital in establishment and developments of manufacturing industries and confined their activities to trade alone. The transformation also did not take place as the king and the nobles and other members of bureaucracy erected great barricades in the way of merchants and traders by monopolising the trade items and wiping off middle man's profits. Moreover, the Mughal Rulers did not provide any stimulus to the growth of capitalism in this country as they were more or less interested only in the inflow of gold or precious metals into their Empire. They remained satisfied as long as the precious metals flowed into their coffers and this added to the material prosperity of the Mughal Emperors rather than the society in general. It never occurred to them to spend money on the industrialisation of the country.

Nevertheless, the significance of the English trade cannot be denied. The impact of the English commerce with India on a competitive basis was beneficient in many ways. New markets were opened for Indian exports. It created new demands for Indian goods and brought into operation new patterns of commercial production, shattered the isolation of local markets and threw up a new class of merchants and bankers symbolished in the enormous wealth of persons like Virji Vohra.

With all its economic minus and plus points, the trade ultimately led to the conquest by the Company of the Indian sub-continent in the Post-Mughal period. It revealed the utter helplessness of the Mughals to check the naval supremacy of the English and subsequently, helped the English in emerging out as the territorial power from the Commercial Organisation.

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